UNDERGROUND IN FRANCE *by Rene Labastide*

NEW MASSES

APRIL 15, 1941 FIFTEEN CENTS

FORD'S EMPIRE TOTTERS

"... the greatest factory on the planet, desolate as Tamerlane's tomb..." *by Joseph North*

WHERE IS THE BALKAN WAR GOING?

by Joseph Starobin

WHY I DEFEND HARRY BRIDGES

by Dalton Trumbo

A. B. Magil, Gardner Rea, Herbert Aptheker, Gropper, John Stuart

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Between Ourselves

YOU'VE probably had the same experience we have: that no matter where you go they talk about the strike at Ford. The picture of King Henry being talked back to by 88,000 workers is something that absorbs people's imagination — they keep trying to visualize that Detroit scene, the blocks of double picket lines, the silent factory, the whole picture as Joseph North gives it in his article in this issue. But not the *whole* picture—no writer could do that in a single article, and besides there's plenty to come in the way of lively happenings. So Joe North is staying on in Detroit this week and his firsthand story of this epic labor battle will continue in the next issue.

We also have on tap a number of articles that we're proud to announce. One is an analysis by Harry F. Ward of the democratic issues involved in the teachers' fight against Rapp-Coudert. Another is a clear and highly readable presentation of the extremely important findings contained in the TNEC reports. Bruce Minton is doing the job on the committee's monographs and reports. And there is an article in two installments, by Herbert Aptheker, on the Negro and the last world war. Aptheker, who is the author of three works on the Negro in American life, has written an eloquent, human document on the 1917-18 Jim Crowism and betrayal that should be remembered particularly now.

All of the foregoing are scheduled for early publication. For we continue to plan issues ahead, in spite of the financial uncertainty that we may not be able to print them. On that subject we refer you to page 13, and let some of the contributors to the fund drive take the floor. Says a Tulsa, Okla., reader who sent $5.57: "I received this check as a refund when I canceled approximately two years of a three-year subscription to the *Nation* on account of not being able to take time any more to sort out the steadily diminishing portion of truth in their pro-Roosevelt, pro-war propaganda. This completes my progress from *Time* to the *Nation* to New Masses. . . . I wish to thank the editorial staff especially for the long article by Anna Louise Strong on China."

And from California: "Conditions out here are rather hard and we fruit growers stand to lose much. Whatever else happens we cannot afford to lose you." Cleveland: "I have a very special feeling for our magazine because, I too shall be thirty this year—and for almost a decade now I have relied upon your penetrating wisdom and analysis of vital situations to guide my thinking through the turbulent thirties." An anonymous contributor signing himself "Liberalus" explains his dollar donation: "I am neither a Communist nor a 'fellow traveler'; yet if I could reach my colleagues—the 'liberals' of the left wing—I should say to them that they must not let New Masses down. They dare not let it down: for it is almost the only magazine left which canalizes the militant, alert, dynamic peace sentiment of those who know what are the seeds from which this war has sprung. I hope it can continue to do that. . . . Either you are in this war or you are against it. Well, I am against it. New Masses is against it—more militantly than any magazine in the land. That is why I—we—must support this magazine."

And a PS from the editors: $2,883 came in on the drive last week, making a total of $8,861 to date—still $16,139 from the total.

"Next Month's Headlines" proved to be a fine, fat subject for the "Interpretation, Please" audience and experts last Friday evening April 4. No one asked for crystal-gazing but they kept the boys on the platform pretty busy with "likely development" angles. Chief subjects of interest were the situation in the Balkans and the labor picture at home. William Blake, Philip Jaffe, Alan Max, A. B. Magil, and Joseph Starobin were the experts who opened the program with a round-table discussion and then answered the barrage of questions.

Herbert Aptheker, whom we mentioned a few paragraphs back, will give a series of six lectures on American history, under the auspices of the NM Readers League. Beginning April 12, Mr. Aptheker will speak every Saturday afternoon at 2:30, at the Malin Studios, 135 West 44th St. "Rediscovering American History" is the title of the series, which will cover the period from Jefferson to the development of American imperialism. Each phase of history will be analyzed on the basis of rank-and-file movements and their effect upon social developments. Individual lectures are 25 cents and the entire series $1.50. For trade union members the cost for the series will be $1. Use of the coupon on page 29 will facilitate your enrollment for the lectures.

A reminder of something else to which NM readers can look forward: our repeat art auction on April 17. You will recall that there was enough art work which came too late for inclusion in the last auction, in addition to promised work which the artists hadn't time to execute. Besides these fine pieces we have recently received contributions from John Groth, the Kallem brothers, Howard Willard, Sylvia Wald, among others. The auction will again take place at the ACA Gallery, 52 West 8th St., New York City, at 8:30 PM. Those who missed out on the first sale will have a chance to secure "art for every pocketbook."

"What's happening in the Balkans" will be discussed by A. B. Magil on Sunday night, April 13, at 8:30—Brighton Community Center, 3200 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Who's Who

RENE LABASTIDE has been active in French political life for many years. He was several times mobilized into the French army. At present he is a refugee, and has just left the United States for South America. . . . Dalton Trumbo is a novelist and screen writer. He is the author of *Johnny Got His Gun* and *The Remarkable Andrew*. . . . Herbert Aptheker is author of *The Negro in the Civil War, Negro Slave Revolts in the United States,* and *The Negro in the American Revolution.* . . . Millicent Lang is a graduate student specializing in contemporary literature.

Flashbacks

MEMO to Mussolini, Hitler and Churchill: Napoleon abdicated April 11, 1814. Think it over. . . . The resistance put up by American working class leaders to the last world war is grimly told in certain court records in the Aprils of other years. On April 13, 1919, Eugene V. Debs began serving ten years for his anti-war record. On the same day and for the same reason Kate Richards O'Hare began serving five years. And on April 11, 1921, the United States Supreme Court upheld charges of criminal syndicalism against William D. Haywood and 790 other members of the anti-war I.W.W. . . . And as the powerful Steel Workers Organizing Committee comes to grips with the Steel Trust we note that the first American union of iron and steel workers was formed at Pittsburgh April 12, 1858. It was called the United Sons of Vulcan.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES
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HENRY FORD'S EMPIRE TOTTERS

". . . the greatest factory on the planet, desolate, quiet as Tamerlane's tomb." The UAW picket lines are miracles of organization. Joseph North talks with Horatio at the drawbridge.

Dearborn.

THERE she stands, the greatest factory on the planet, desolate, quiet as Tamerlane's tomb. I was there this morning again a few hours before dawn. The rain had abated somewhat and the men, the older men, were huddled about the bonfires that glowed inside the big tin barrels before each gate where the pickets trudged. As far as you could see up the great eight-lane highway that skirts the plant, the picket fires lit up the darkness, telling of thousands of men determined that nobody get in. Such picket fires must have glowed in the darkness of Valley Forge and of Gettysburg. For this strike is epochal. There has never been anything quite like it in the long turbulent history of the American working class.

A few feet away from the pickets, separated by the great barbed wire fence, Ford's storm troopers were at bay. I looked at them inside their fortress, their faces pressed against the window panes. The arc light revealed their features, some puzzled, some haggard with fear, some impassive with the dead pan of the killer. I saw one of the goons raise his hand slowly above the sill, a dagger gleaming from his fist. He raised it slowly, cautiously, looking at the pickets all the while. I remarked about it to the man in front of me. He glanced at the window. "Put that damn can opener down," he jeered. The other pickets took up the cry and the "can opener" came down. A state trooper's car drove up, halted a moment, drove on.

Outside on the long, two-mile pavement before the plant the pickets marched, some of them wrapped in blankets, a few with umbrellas, one with a mariner's hat and raincoat. Most of them got along in their soaked overcoats, their collars high. Each of the twenty-seven gates and entrances had its picket line. The day before some 15,000 pickets tramped before Gates Four, Three, and the foundry. The strikers weren't satisfied with pickets on legs. They took to picketing on wheels. Thousands of them in a great procession of automobiles toured the plant, around and around, warily, nothing escaping their eye. One carload of scabs shot out of one entrance, and in a jiffy it was surrounded by four carloads of strikers who captured the scabs. "Nobody's getting in or out without our permission," the picketers say. And nobody is.

THE PICKET LINES are miracles of organization, devised by the infinite ingenuity of the working men. Their "barricades" of cars at the entrances and exits of the roads leading to the plant had "cut the enemy's line of communications," as one of them said to me. The great organizer, Henry Ford (King Henry V8, as the strikers call him), had found his match. His slaves were now his equals, his peers. The sagacity and spirit of the proletarian, it should be clear to everyone by now, cannot be crushed. Here was an industrial empire founded on the basis of crushing the worker's will. Here was the killing monotony and backbreaking toil of the belt. Here was the terror of the goon, the subtlety of high powered propaganda—and look at these picket lines!

The picket captain, twenty-nine, graduate of a Detroit high school, was a well built, first generation son of a Scotch immigrant. He didn't want to go home till it was all over. Once in a while he would call up his wife, tell her he was okay, ask how the kid was, and return to his post. He said he was a little afraid to leave for fear somehow something would happen. Yesterday he had prevented a big lake steamer from docking at the plant bringing God knows what strikebreakers, supplies, machine guns. He had stopped it by summoning his men to the drawbridge over the River Rouge. They had clambered into their cars, raced to the bridge. They shouted to the operator not to lift that damn drawbridge. The operator had come down from his perch, pleaded with them through the barbed wire fence. The young picket captain was insistent: "She don't pass." The men stood by their cars on the drawbridge. If it lifted many might have been killed. The operator shrugged his shoulders, climbed back to his perch. The steamer lay there, its crew looking up at the men on the drawbridge, grinning.

"Horatio at the drawbridge," I kidded him. He smiled. "Look at her," he said, waving at the plant. The great empire of Henry Ford had come to this: the smoke stacks stretched to the clouds and not a wisp of smoke emerged. He led me to the window through which we looked at the great belt that drove thousands of men like mad. It stood frozen. I looked at it, remembering when I had seen it in motion several years before with men clambering over its sides, under cars, over cars, inside cars, and there it was now—insanely motionless. Its power had flowed away. Its power was outside here, on Miller Road, on the picket lines, in these men trudging in the rain.

"Horatio" led me to another window into which we peered and saw an odd sight. Men were riding around in miniature trucks, backing up, zigzagging, sweeping ahead. "They're these blitzbuggies for the army," he said. "Goons riding in them. They're stir-crazy, these goons. Know what that is? Some convicts go nuts from imprisonment. That's them. No food has gone in. They can't come out. They can't get smokes. Friend of mine, a maintenance man we had sent in, told me they're hopped up with booze. They surrounded him, took his button off, tore up his union card, pushed him around. Some of them are afraid to look out at the picket lines. Some get into those blitzbuggies, drive them all over the plant for nothing better to do. Others roam the plant, baseball bats in their hands. They're hungry, mad, scared. When you cough inside there, the echo rattles like a machine gun. They fight with each other."

I looked at Harry Bennett's once arrogant service men, the scourge of the Ford workers. It had come to this. They were the frightened, they with all their paraphernalia of violence, they were the besieged. I wondered if their employers would get the full moral of this. These were the props of the empire of King Henry, and look what happened to them in face of the organized workers of that empire. What about the states that were built on the model of this industrial kingdom? The thought must bring sleepless nights to the more canny capitalists.

IN A SUBSEQUENT ARTICLE I shall deal with the strike and the kingdom of Henry in detail. In this brief piece I want to tell only of a few salient aspects that confront the strikers, four days after the strike began. In the next few days a totally new phase will open. The authorities to date have "gone easy" relatively. Labor conciliator Dewey's optimistic statements are not borne out by the facts. Ford will continue to fight dirty, in the old way, the only way he knows. Indications are that Ford hopes to provoke a situation of violence on such a scale that the state legislature here will invite the administration to send troops in. He hopes to win enough Negroes to his side to swing the strike. He wants to delay long enough to allow Bill Green to do some more dirty work. (AFL rank and filers out here have pledged support to the strikers. The teamsters, most notably, passed a resolution declaring that they wouldn't cross the picket lines.) Ford pulled an awful boner in proposing the discredited Homer Martin to lead the AFL back-to-work movement. The Wayne County Industrial Council (AFL) had to repudiate Martin after

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the storm of rank and file protest. Ford hopes to procrastinate long enough to allow the AFL to regain lost ground. If he can drag the strike on, one way or another he hopes to discourage the strikers sufficiently to have them follow the AFL back into the plant. His agents are scouring the pool rooms of Monroe, Inkster, and other company towns here for strikebreakers. Students, too, are being offered fancy prices to come in.

The situation concerning the Negroes is crucial. Ford has had a policy of hiring Negroes —12,000 of the 88,000—putting them to work next to men up from the South. He figured that would keep the workers divided, stir up race hatred. Most of the Negroes work in the foundry, the hardest, dirtiest job of all. But he has allowed a few to run some machines, paid these few good wages. He has boasted that he permits no discrimination in his plant. His emissaries are working overtime in the Negro neighborhoods to spread that notion. Harry Bennett brought Negroes up from the South the past few weeks in expectation of this emergency. The head of the service department literally forced the new Negroes out to fight with the strikers. He had them stir up race rioting and throw the unionists and the entire city into civil war. There was really great danger of that the first few days of the strike.

But one must not be misled by Ford propaganda. The great majority of the 12,000 Negro workers did go out on strike, and are cooperating with their white brothers. Many in the Negro community understand the dangers and they are meeting in the churches to forestall the threat of race rioting. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has sent sound trucks cruising through the Negro neighborhood urging the residents not to be lured into strike breaking. The union has made its stand clear on this issue.

Nonetheless, Bennett continues with his plans. He may try to rush the foundry gates, create a situation of violence, and gain his ends. That remains a danger. But the strikers have been forewarned and they are moving fast on this front. Negro women are turning up to help at the soup kitchens, more of the Negro men are taking their turn on the picket line. In fact, the picket line is truly the arsenal of democracy. The fraternity there, the solidarity of all the men, is remarkable. At one of the gates, I saw a picket go from man to man: "Nickel, nickel, nickel," he was saying. "Throw a nickel in the hat. We're going to send a telegram of solidarity to the Allis-Chalmers boys." He got his nickels. I heard them composing the telegram. "Dear Brothers," it read. "Hold your ranks and we'll hold ours. That's how victory will be won. They can't beat us. Fraternally, Ford Strikers."

I met my friend again, Horatio of the drawbridge. "I got a good one for you," he said. "Write this down. We got the plant so sewed up nothing's going in, no food, nothing. The goons in there are almost starving. One of them came out to the fence this morning, pleaded with the pickets for a cup of coffee the soup kitchen girls had brought around. The pickets told him off, believe me. But it was early in the morning, chilly, and they needed some charcoal for their fires. They told the goon if he brought them a barrel of charcoal they'd give him a cup of coffee. He came back a little later rolling a barrel of charcoal and got his cup. Then they told him what a sonofabitch he was as he was standing there on the other side of the fence, drinking the coffee. That's what's come of Harry Bennett's dreaded service department."

JOSEPH NORTH.

Michaels

"If the wires to Berlin are cut off, get me Washington."

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WHERE IS THE BALKAN WAR GOING?

Hitler has dual objectives in his drive to the Dardanelles. Churchill has the same objectives, in reverse. What Soviet policy means. A survey by Joseph Starobin.

BY NOW, it is a commonplace that Germany signed the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in order to concentrate on one front, in the west. This was a strategy which flowed directly from the Munich conference and the defeat of Spain. It was strictly Bismarckian, and moreover, it coincided with the Soviet Union's intention to remain neutral toward a war which it had not been able to prevent. But it is a paradoxical fact that once the western front collapsed, Germany achieved a position of such strength on the continent that she could now carry forth her warfare in several different directions at the same time. In Europe proper, two new fronts emerged where only one had existed before. The first was over and around the British Isles; the second developed along the Danube River, leading unmistakably toward the Dardanelles, the Near East, and the Suez Canal.

All during the fall and winter of last year, a fierce naval and air warfare raged along the Atlantic front. Britain was severely bombed for the first time in history, while Nazi submarines and planes inflicted mounting losses on Britain's marine communications with her overseas empire and the United States. Britain tightened her blockade, and retaliated in proportion to her strength by bombardments of northwestern Europe, the German or German-controlled transport junctions, the naval bases and airfields, the naval building centers. It is still not possible to estimate the precise cost of this warfare to either side. The fact is that it was not conclusive. The invasion of Britain did not take place. Perhaps it was attempted and met with failure. Perhaps it was postponed for more intensive preparations. For all we know, it may never have been intended.

Simultaneously, Hitler had already begun his movement along the Danube valley, a movement which is still continuing toward the Dardanelles and may form the really important theater of the war in the next few months. In midsummer 1940, the Nazis were successful in rupturing the husk of Rumania's relations with London. King Carol fled, and his son took over the throne as the figurehead of a military dictatorship. Hungary and Bulgaria re-occupied territories taken away after the last World War. Internal opposition was suppressed and by mid-October it became known that German troops were occupying Rumania all the way down to the delta of the Danube on the Black Sea. This was no incidental operation; coupled with Marshal Graziani's thrust into western Egypt, approximately one hundred miles deep, the Axis was clearly engaged in a many-pronged effort to reach the hub of the British empire at Suez.

Five or six months later, it becomes possible to strike some sort of balance, to probe the intentions of both sides, and the repercussions on other powers.

The most striking fact is that fascist Italy has borne the brunt of the battle, and come off second best. In East Africa, Australian, South African, and native troops under British command have literally torn the Italian empire apart. Even though their success may be due more to Italian weakness than British strength, the fact remains that the campaigns in East Africa have been remarkable in their results. Much the same can be said for Libya, where the most famous Italian colonial general has been forced to resign, where hundreds of thousands of men, and millions of lire in materiel and colonial projects have been abandoned. Instead of accepting the invasion of Greece by Mussolini's force, the British have carried out their own invasion of Greece. They have taken over the island of Crete and evidently southern Greece. And here again, the impact upon the fascisti has been terrific. Whereas in mid-summer Churchill admitted that the collapse of France had disrupted Britain's naval strategy, today Britain's control of the Mediterranean has been reaffirmed. The Italian navy, quite formidable on paper, has suffered two rebuffs—at Taranto last November and in the Ionian sea two weeks ago. Italian fascism has revealed the depth of its inner crisis. The evidence is that German troops are occupying more and more of Italy. Certainly, Hitler must give Mussolini far more support from now on than he can expect to receive.

NEW MASSES' editorial on page 18 considers in what way the resistance of Yugoslavia affects Hitler's objectives. It is necessary, however, to consider just what Hitler's objectives really are. At first thought, any number come to mind. In the Near East, will be found oil fields which produce 20,000,000 tons per year, more than enough for all Europe to carry forth the war. Gaining Syria, Hitler would be in a position to settle his relations with France, perhaps force the full cooperation of her colonies and her fleet. In the Near East, the British stand to lose the training fields, the depots and naval bases, the *place d'armes* for all their imperial forces east and south of Suez. In short, Hitler would have made the first real incursion into the British empire. And since this is a war for empire, Hitler might reasonably expect that by gaining so crucial a position in the Near East, he could force a reconsideration of his "peace" offer, rejected last summer and fall. It might not be necessary to invade the British Isles at all in order to win the war.

But the peculiar and distinguishing fact about this *Drang nach Osten* lies in that it is directed not only against Britain but also against the Soviet Union. Or more exactly, it *could* be directed not only against the hub of the British empire but also against the entire southern shore of the Black Sea, extending to the very borders of the Caucasus. It is a double-edged strategy which Hitler has developed since last summer; it is a double-edged position which he seeks. And he hopes to keep both sides guessing as to which edge he intends to use. If queried by the Soviet Union, Hitler can demur that after all, his drive into the Near East is simply a phase of a world war, in which he is coming to grips with the rival in the rival's own empire; why need that concern the USSR any more than the battle of the Atlantic? On the other hand, as he gets deeper into the Near East, Hitler speculates that the Tories will acknowledge the strength of his position in their empire more readily if at the same time they believe he will use that position to launch a successful action against the Soviet Union.

BRITISH STRATEGISTS and their friends in this country are fully aware of the dual character of Hitler's advance. Their strategy is not only to defend the empire in one of its most vulnerable regions: their strategy is to defend the empire in such a way as to *minimize the anti-British aspects of Germany's drive in order to aggravate its anti-Soviet aspect.* The British believe that if Hitler can be halted or delayed somewhere on the road to Suez, then, with the increasing effectiveness of support from the empire and the United States, Hitler will have to consider a truce on their terms—or what may be the same thing, will have to turn against the USSR.

Walter Lippmann expressed this strategy in its most cynical clarity, in a syndicated column devoted to "Russia's Policy" on March 6: "The plains of Russia," says this hardboiled imperialist, "are ideally suited to conquest by a mechanized army. . . ." Thus far, "Hitler has been irresistible—but only on land, except in Norway when the connecting sea was easily under control from German territory." . . . Hitler has been forced to stop at the shore line of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and "so long as Britain controls the seas Hitler is locked inside of continental Europe." From which he draws the

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conclusion that "if Hitler finds he cannot use his powerful but unemployed army against Britain and the overseas world, there remains Russia, which is easy to conquer—and (observe the compliment!) well worth conquering."

"When there are no longer any intervening countries which can be sacrificed," Lippmann declares with a completely callous calculation, "when the Russian hole in the blockade is closed, when resistance to Hitler is consolidated with water between the German army and the Allies, when Hitler cannot get at the Allies but can still get at Russia, then Stalin's policy will have been played out. . . ." That is to say, Germany and the Soviet Union will destroy each other, thus relieving Mr. Lippmann and his friends of any obligation except to occupy Hitler's rear, and restore "order." This is perhaps the clearest, most brutal statement of American war aims I have yet seen. And in a recent visit to Washington I found many observers and writers on foreign affairs confessing with a delectable frankness that this was really the sort of war against fascism they'd like to fight: namely a war to "persuade" the Nazis to turn against the land of socialism.

The revelation of these war aims is for the moment beside the point. Everything that Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill are doing at home indicates quite clearly the sort of war they are fighting, and against whom it is directed. Nor is it my business to remind Mr. Lippmann that perhaps he is again being taken in by Mr. Goebbels' propaganda . . . possibly Mr. Bullitt is misleading Washington about "Soviet weakness" quite the way he misled London and Paris . . . perhaps the Nazis are once again peddling the idea that they are willing to consider war against the USSR *at a price* . . . perhaps Mr. Lippmann is letting the same boomerang that smacked him two years ago, smack him again. The important thing is the confirmation of our general thesis: that British and American warfare in southeastern Europe and the Levant represents more than the warfare of one imperialist power against another. What they are fighting for is position against each other. Whoever gains the better position this year, calculates to force the other to terms—on his terms.

What now must be said about Soviet policy in the face of decisive events which are maturing? To begin with, an aside is necessary. Capitalist commentators usually content themselves with the chatter that Soviet policy is "enigmatic," is motivated by "fear," by "weakness," etc. At best, they indulge in wild guessing; at worst, in the most abysmal slander. On the other hand, observers who are sympathetic to the Soviet Union are invariably accused of being agents of the Soviet state: if they say things which are foolish, or prove to be untrue, they are taunted with the charge of having had poor contact "with Stalin"; if what they say is reasonable and proves sound, they are accused of having direct diplomatic relations with the Soviet Foreign Office.

"Now take Valtin—he went from a pile of rocks to a pile of dough."

As a matter of fact, there is a simple, fundamental pattern in Soviet foreign policy, which is not only becoming clearer to millions of people all over the globe, but which has gained, and is gaining, their increasing admiration and respect. Today it is obvious to everyone except Social Democrats, fourflushers, and political impotents that Soviet policy is, and has been, completely independent of German policy. Everything which the USSR has done in these last two years has been dictated by the basic considerations of defending the interests of its two hundred million citizens who are building a new civilization—and that has been done in such a way as to advance the interests of world socialism, of which the USSR is the cornerstone, the powerful and vigilant vanguard.

In the last seven months a definite cycle has run its course in the Balkans. Soviet policy has been revealed as divergent to both Hitler's and Churchill's; the former has tried to use the Balkans as a passageway to the Near East, the latter has tried to use the Balkans as a foothold for a continental campaign. The USSR has tried to use its moral and diplomatic pressure to oppose the extension of the war. If it has not been successful, at least it has impeded the *Drang nach Osten*. Its role has not only made the difference between this war and the last; it has registered deeply in the minds of the common people of eastern Europe, upon whom the ultimate task of ending the war lies. When German troops moved into Rumania in mid-October, a Soviet note made clear that this movement was without the consent of the USSR. When the Bulgarian ruling class joined with Hitler against the will of the Bulgarian people, and for aggressive designs against Bulgaria's neighbors, the Soviet note was unequivocal. And now, by signing the treaty of non-aggression and friendship with Yugoslavia at the very eve of the Nazi invasion, the USSR makes clear in the most dramatic fashion her opposition to the spread of the conflict, her intention to continue the friendliest relations with the Yugoslav people through and beyond the conflict.

In the case of Turkey, the Soviet Union has taken what seems to me an even more significant stand. Part of the reason is strategic, of course. Turkey forms the southern salient of the Soviet Ukrainian frontier; geographically, the USSR adjoins on Turkey's northern and eastern border. Turkey also has a specific historical background quite different from that of any other Balkan power. Her ruling class preserved Turkish independence and territorial integrity by a national revolution against British, and to a lesser extent, against French and Italian imperialism only eighteen years ago. Turkish industrial development has not produced a fully imperialist bourgeoisie, although different groups within it have at various times been linked to German and British capital. The Soviet exchange of notes with the Turkish government was not a commitment of Soviet assistance in case of attack. But it was an indication that Turkey might very well form the butt of the next phase in the Anglo-German conflict. It was an indication that the USSR opposes such a development, and proceeds from a basis which is wholly independent of Britain's alliance with the Turks. It was a reminder that by passing across the Dardanelles, the war would be entering the colonial and semi-colonial world, a world with which the USSR has always maintained special and friendly relations.

THE PERSPECTIVE is not necessarily physical conflict between the Soviet Union and Germany, just as it is not at all a matter of the Soviet Union seeking war alliances with Britain and the United States. It is not a matter of "fearing war," of fearing hostile action by any of the imperialist powers alone. After all, a war which is forced upon the USSR, as its leaders have declared many times, would be full-scale, a total war. As Hitler knows right well, and as Churchill may remember from the Finnish experience just a year ago, such a war would be fought out on imperialist soil, in which the USSR would have advantages far beyond her moral unity, her economic and military might. No, the Soviet interest in limiting the spread of war does not arise from fear. It flows from the fact that Soviet society is a socialist society, where no capitalist class profits, where construction—not destruction, where life—not death is the fundamental law.

It remains to be seen, now that the battle is joined and a front has been opened, just what the major belligerents will accomplish in the Balkans. Hitler's hand has been forced; Churchill must now show how strong his hand really is. And bearing in mind that the Balkans are a corridor to the more decisive theaters of the war, it remains to be seen where the big powers get, and at *what cost* to themselves. Unlike them, the Soviet Union is not employing weaker peoples as pawns. Hers is a policy of peace. But it should not be expected to be passive.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN FRANCE

The demobilized Alberts went "fishing." Millions have named the chief of state Marshal "Petrin." The French people carry on against Hitler. How the underground works.

This is the first of two articles written by a Frenchman who has just left this country for South America. The second article in an early issue will answer the question of whether labor was really responsible for France's defeat. It will describe, as has never been told before, just how the French ruling class undermined French productive capacity and morale. It is especially valuable in view of the attacks upon American labor today—The Editors.

"ALL France is behind Petain," claims Vichy. "All France is behind Petain," echo the Vichy correspondents of the American newspapers.

But a recent photo, passed by the French censor and published in the New York *Times,* gives a rather more accurate picture of contemporary France. According to the caption, Petain is shown "on visit to industrial city of Saint-Etienne, welcomed by a laborer." The "laborer," with his well-cut topcoat, dark hat, and white collar, resembles a French worker just as much as Petain looks like a youngster. Beside him, an armed and helmeted guardsman stands at attention. In the background, a Catholic priest shouts his approval. As for the French people, they are absent.

Where are they? Well, 1,800,000 are prisoners in Germany. Many thousands, wounded and crippled, still await in the hospital the day when, at last, they will be able to stumble on crutches, stretch in a wheel chair, and live again—from stump to mouth. Thousands more starve in concentration camps, or face long years, not behind Petain, but behind prison bars. All these men and women can be accounted for. But what happened to the 40,000,000 French men and women, those who are never photographed or interviewed, those who do not broadcast or contribute to the newspapers?

Their present history begins on the morning of Sept. 3, 1939. It was the day when war was declared, and we found ourselves in our army depots, completely isolated. We were surrounded by strangers and did not dare to confide in anyone. The press and the radio were pouring out their propaganda: Hitler was mentioned only occasionally, most of the attacks were concentrated against the outlawed Communist Party, and the Soviet Union. *Paris-Soir,* the largest French daily, carried a front page headline announcing that Hitler intended to rename the National Socialist party—National Communist—and go to Moscow to join the Third International.

Such obvious lies were designed to support somewhat subtler distortions of the truth. The Soviet-German non-aggression pact, the papers told us, spelled the death of the French Communist Party, deserted by its membership. They displayed the pictures and statements of every renegade they could get hold of. It looked as though one remained the only person who had not sold out.

I REMEMBER drilling and marching, eating and loafing, and continuously repeating to myself, "Anything can happen, but two times two is still four. I don't know the facts, and I'm being fed propaganda. But two times two still is four. Any war between capitalist states is an imperialist war, and the common people have nothing to do with it. Men don't change overnight. If I stand firm, so will millions of other people. They are scattered and isolated. My neighbor may be one of them, or my neighbor's neighbor. In due time, we'll all come together. Two times two still is four."

Then, one day, I received a card. It came from a mobilized worker whom I had met in the army some years earlier. He happened to learn my address and sent me just a few words, obviously bearing the censor in mind. "The food is all right," he wrote; "the officers are nice, and my morale is good as ever." The last words were underlined. At once I knew that all that time I had been right.

What happened to me was happening all over France. A chance remark, the absent-minded whistling of a revolutionary song, the mention of a name, or a place, brought two men together. Two became four, by the simple magic of the multiplication table. Letters from home, leaves of absence, growing familiarity and confidence among the soldiers did the rest.

An aviation sergeant showed me the first illegal leaflet I had read since the beginning of the war. Our company cook gave me the first copy of the underground *L'Humanite.* We were no longer Robinson Crusoes lost on uninhabited islands. The outlawed and presumably deceased Communist Party was busy bringing people together, coordinating their activities, giving political significance to the ever-spreading discontent.

As a matter of fact, the soldiers had more than enough reasons to be dissatisfied. Conditions in the army were bad. At home, they were even worse. Nobody understood why the same men who had betrayed a democratic Czechoslovakia forced us now to fight for a fascist Poland. Nobody understood why the government had declared war and did not wage it. All was quiet on the Western front. The only warlike communiques came from the police headquarters which were running down "subversive elements." The big battles were fought against the French workers.

We did not like our officers. We hated the police, only a few of whom had been mobilized. We disliked the British. We loathed the dirt in the army, the army regulations, and the inactivity which had been imposed upon us.

Looking back upon those days, I think there

L'HUMANITÉ du SOLDAT

L'Avant-Garde

Here's the way the French Communists carry on. Just arrived in this country via underground channels, these two mimeographed leaflets tell the tale of Communist heroism in bringing the facts about the betrayal to the people of France. "L'Humanite du Soldat" *is published by, and for, the army. Its first sentence reads "France has been sold out."* "L'Avant-Garde" *continues the name of the former mass newspaper of the French Young Communist League. It is addressed to the youth of Toulouse.*

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is no way of telling what would have happened, had not Hitler come to the rescue of his Munich partners. The invasion of France, the sudden disorderly flight of the army, and ten to fifteen million civilian refugees, plunged the country into a primitive state out of which it emerged, a few weeks later, stunned and ruined, to discover that Vichy was the capital of France, Hitler her best friend, and Petain a great man.

Petrin in French means "kneader," but "to be in a kneader"—*etre dans le petrin*—is a colloquialism that may be best translated: "to be in a fine pickle." A few weeks after the armistice, Chief of State Petain was nicknamed Marshal *Petrin.*

I REMEMBER the last hour I spent, on the eve of the demobilization, with Albert, a soldier friend of mine, who was a truck driver, and a Communist. "What are you going to do now?" I asked him. "First, I'll try to locate my wife," Albert replied, "and settle down somewhere in the free zone. Then I'll look for a job, and for comrades." "That's a big order." "Don't you worry, I'll find them." "You'll have to revise all your old methods and habits," I said. "No more public speeches, no more discussions in cafes, no more free union meetings." "Sure. But you just have to use your brains. Who can, for instance, prevent you from going fishing with friends? Fish don't hear; they won't report us to the police."

Similar conversations were taking place all over France. People had first to find their families, find some kind of a home, a job, or a dole. Since the trains ran when and where they pleased, and it took a telegram five days to cover 200 miles, that meant weeks and months of often useless errands. A day came, however, when demobilized Alberts went "fishing."

The situation was the same as at the beginning of war. Every person was left more or less by himself, in new surroundings, among strangers. Naturally enough, the ways of "fishing" proved to be as innumerable as the fish in the sea.

In Marseille, a man, perhaps a teacher or a clerk, worked night after night, clumsily pounding on a typewriter. By his side, steadily grew a pile of stickers. They bore just one sentence, in capital letters, underlined with a red pencil: "JOIN THE FRONT OF FREEDOM." Week after week, the man pasted them on mailboxes, lamp posts, front doors. I saw many of them, a touching and meticulous job, done by someone who obviously typed with two fingers.

Vichy was campaigning for the so-called "National Relief" Fund. A special day had been set aside for the collection of money. It was very successful at Vence, a little town perched high in the south of France, where the sale of buttons reached an unexpected peak. They turned out to be tiny red Phrygian bonnets, the symbol of the Republic, and the official insignia of the Popular Front!

The radio, too, played an important role. The French audience, both in the occupied and "free" zones, boycotted Paris and Vichy, and tuned in London, Moscow, Ankara, and Geneva. I remember walking, one evening, along a street of Limoges, in mid-western France. All the windows were open, and in the dark houses the radios were tuned in. I did not have to stop one single time to hear the entire 8:15 PM news broadcast from London: as I kept walking, every house contributed its share. (That did not mean, of course, that all the tenants were pro-British, but they obviously disliked Berlin and Vichy.)

It was forbidden to broadcast foreign stations in public places, and, in the occupied zone, the Nazis extended the ban to private homes. But nobody cared. The overpublicized Gestapo turned out to be just another secret police, more efficient and systematic than the French, but by no means all-powerful. Since it was no longer seen at a distance, there was nothing mystic about it. Apparently its strength in Germany was chiefly based on a thorough knowledge of local conditions and a widespread net of reporters. In France, the Gestapo lacked both, and, at the same time, was trying to be careful not to antagonize the population. It preferred to leave the dirty work to the French police, only too glad to oblige. As for the Gestapo, it concentrated on the German units stationed in France. Only the youngest Nazi soldiers, called to colors after the June armistice, displayed any kind of enthusiasm. Their elders were beginning to show signs of disillusionment. The first world war veterans, very numerous among the troops of occupation, were particularly bitter. To hear some of them speak, it was obvious that even at home, in Germany, the Gestapo had far from succeeded in sending all of the "subversive elements" to the concentration camps.

In the "free" zone, the Gestapo agents did not interfere with domestic affairs, probably considering that Vichy handled them in a competent fascist way. But both the Gestapo and the Surete Nationale were working against big odds. Since the retreat, about one half of the entire French population had moved to new locations; the spies did not necessarily move along with the people they were spying on; the old police files were of little use. What is more, if the enemies of the Vichy regime had to get used to underground tactics, so had the police, and usually they were not the faster thinkers. In fact, they did and still do arrest scores of "dangerous individuals" every day, but that is due less to their efficiency than to the magnitude of the popular revolt. Despite all their efforts, the Surete Nationale has never been able to stop a single issue of *L'Humanite,* the Communist newspaper, forbidden by Daladier in August 1939. It was coming out regularly and distributed widely when I left France early this year.

As time passed, and restlessness and discontent grew among the people, the scattered individual initiatives were gradually supplemented and replaced by more coordinated and efficient work. France, whether "free" or occupied, was flooded with illegal papers and leaflets. "Out with Marshal *Petrin* and the Laval gang!" read one of them. Another, circulated among soldiers: "France has been sold out. History has never witnessed a more shameful deal than the unprecedented armistice treaty." Still another, published by the Toulouse Young Communist League, attacked "the unscrupulous men who are determined to carry out Hitler's and Mussolini's demands."

Since the leaflets were the only available source of uncensored domestic information, they met with a tremendous popular reception. They provided the news, explained the events, offered solutions. They expressed the thoughts of many isolated people, and made them feel that they were not alone.

The illegal literature receives its best tribute from the authorities themselves, who consider it as dangerous as firearms, and treat it as such. As a matter of fact, in many districts, the officials have forbidden the sale of mimeograph machines and stencils without a police permit. Every buyer has to write down his name and address in a special register. When that proved ineffective, another ordinance provided that when leaflets are distributed in a given locality and the distributors escape being arrested, all the inhabitants of the place who have been known in the past for their Communist sympathies are to be sent to jail.

But the Communists are by no means the only enemies of Vichy. The 5,000,000 members of the French Federation of Labor did not follow Rene Belin, a former Red-baiting and pro-Munich union leader, when he entered Vichy's Cabinet as "Minister of Labor." The 2,000,000 men who voted the Socialist ticket back in 1936 cannot trust any longer their former leaders who either submitted without fighting, like Leon Blum, or became, like Paul Faure, influential advisers to Marshal Petain. The 1,200,000 Radical Socialist voters, deeply attached to a republican and parliamentary form of government, traditionally are opposed to a military dictatorship. In addition, hundreds of thousands of men and women, who hitherto were not interested in politics, were made to realize what they had lost. One does not have to be a revolutionist to feel nauseated when, for instance, the City Council of Algiers renames the Jean Jaures street after the former Paris police chief Jean Chiappe, the most hated cop of France.

I HAVE been asked my judgment of popular sentiment today. I would say that among those who fight Vichy, a distinct minority favors General de Gaulle, the British-controlled head of the "Free French" forces. That is not so much because they know him —he was practically unknown before he went to London—but because he is at least a symbol of the struggle against the Nazis. These people are chiefly engaged in anti-German sabotage; they keeep the British informed, and organize the flight of those who want to join the "Free French" units. Their role is necessarily passive, since they wait for the

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British to deliver them by winning the war.

The Communists, on the contrary, are the most active, determined, and experienced fighters against the Vichy regime, the only ones who know not only against *whom,* but for *what* they are fighting. They do not forget that back in 1936, the British bourgeoisie did its best to destroy the Popular Front, that before France experienced the German occupation, she was occupied by the British financial interests. If French Big Business, unable to check the people's struggle for freedom alone, seeks the support of whatever foreign power is momentarily best established for that purpose—yesterday Britain, today Germany, and tomorrow maybe Britain again —the people have nothing to gain by supporting one of its exploiters against the other. The salvation of France can, must, and will come only from France herself.

This opinion is not simply my own. It is supported by facts, and reaches an ever increasing audience. I happen to know that in Marseille, for instance, the Communist units already were reorganized and functioned by the end of September 1939. In Paris, the Communist propaganda is as strong, if not stronger, than at the peak of the Popular Front drive. There is no city in France where the attention of a passer-by is not attracted by Communist slogans, hammers and sickles, painted or chalked on the walls. Perhaps the conclusive proof of the popularity of the Communists and the confidence they enjoy, is the fact that their leaders, Maurice Thorez, Jacques Duclos, and others, whose faces are familiar to everyone, have been able to hide "somewhere in France" since the beginning of the war. The police, despite every effort, have not gotten any one of them.

In their struggle against the regime, the French people already have won a few minor victories. Marshal *Petrin* has had to drop some of his collaborators who too obviously represented Big Business. The religious classes, which were to be made compulsory in all the public schools, have now been decreed optional. The "red tape" in the distribution of rationed foodstuffs has been cut down. The profits of the corporations are limited to six percent. Of course, most of these measures are illusory, but they show that the Vichy government does not have an easy time. The recent trips of the Marshal to the industrial areas of France and the speeches that he delivered there are proof that the officials are seriously concerned over the situation.

They very well ought to be, because the only man among them who has any kind of personal prestige is the Chief of State himself. The seven stars on the Marshal's uniform sleeve radiate victorious memories. The patriotic small bourgeoisie cannot believe as yet that the "hero of Verdun" is a traitor. They follow him only because they hope that in his heart he opposes the Nazis and plays for time, that not he, but men like Pierre Laval are responsible for the Vichy policy.

The petty bourgeoisie, however, never is an independent and decisive political force. The "mass" basis of the French regime is strictly limited to Big Business, the Army Command, and the higher dignitaries of the Catholic Church. Since they have never succeeded in founding a mass fascist party, they need bayonets to enforce their rule. They cannot depend on French soldiers, recruited chiefly from the peasants and workers. But the Nazi troops are a welcome substitute.

Thus, Vichy of necessity must collaborate with Hitler. That is one of the chief inner contradictions of the regime. Every step on the path of "collaboration" deprives Vichy of its none-too-numerous supporters. Every show of real resistance to the German demands is likely to alienate its only effective weapon. In the first case, Vichy loses supporters. In the second, it loses support.

Nevertheless, as long as Marshal Petain is able to play his double-faced game, he is the only man who can keep France safe for capitalism. That is why Berlin needs him just as much as London and Washington. It is not a mere coincidence that neither Churchill nor General de Gaulle ever assail the Marshal personally. They try to picture him as an unfortunate prisoner of the Nazis, and blame on the latter every one of Vichy's moves. Should the Germans lose the war, the Churchill government would immediately step in to support the Petain regime—if there still is a Petain regime at that time, which is less certain.

It would be wishful thinking to expect an imminent popular revolt against Vichy and its Nazi partners. But neither should one believe that the French people are defeated forever. There is a stanza which was added to the old revolutionary song *La Carmagnole,* after the fall of the Paris Commune. It says, "The defeated Commune does not consider itself vanquished." That is how the French feel today. In the past, they survived kings, emperors, and dictators. Many things have changed since. But two times two still equals four.

RENE LABASTIDE.

Doris Rosenthal

Chiquillos

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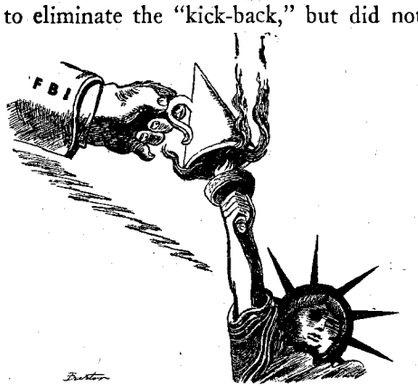
WHY I DEFEND HARRY BRIDGES

Dalton Trumbo tells what is behind the attempt to deport the West Coast labor leader. His "crime" was to win increases in pay for his union members. Spies, bribery, and corruption.

I BELIEVE that the . . . deportation hearings against Harry Renton Bridges, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and California Director of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, constitute a grave and dangerous challenge to the civil rights of the American people. I believe it is the duty of patriotic persons to expose and resist such a challenge. I believe that the great virtue of the democratic system is contained in the right—even the obligation—of Americans freely to criticize the actions of their government. I believe that such criticism can and should be made without either the actual or implied advocacy of any other form of government. Without any reservations I subscribe to the principles of the Constitution and to the traditions of the American people. I gladly accept the obligation imposed by citizenship upon all of us to defend them. I believe that they can best be defended by defending Harry Bridges. . . .

Before the 1934 strike 12,000 longshoremen of the Pacific Coast existed under almost feudal conditions. Their average earnings were $10.45 per week. They were the victims of the "shape-up," which operated in this fashion: The call from employers would go out along the waterfront for workers to assemble at, say, seven in the morning. Four or five hundred men would appear and assume a formation known as the "shape-up" in order that the straw-bosses might select their crews. Ten percent of the men were chosen, the remaining ninety percent went home to try again tomorrow. The lucky ten percent were known as "star gangs." Throughout the length of the Pacific Coast the "star gangs" got the work, while the labor reservoir of the remaining ninety percent effectively held wages down and mitigated against labor organization. The "star gangs" were forced to reciprocate for the favors shown them by "kicking back" from ten percent to fifteen percent of their wages to the straw-bosses. The result was chaos and virtual slavery.

Later, under the threat of growing tension, the owners set up hiring halls, which helped to eliminate the "kick-back," but did nothing to spread the work and eliminate the "star gangs," since the hiring hall "dispatcher"—the man who chose who should work and who should starve—was an employee of the owners. The possibilities of graft and discrimination remained staggering. With the advent of NRA, the International Longshoremen's Association became active once again, obtaining a new charter from the AFL. The men, swarmed into the organization. The employers responded with labor spies, wholesale bribing, beating of organizers, blacklisting and discharging of union men, and, of course, the hoary charge of Communism. Violence stalked the whole waterfront. Union men learned to travel together—never alone. It seemed that the San Francisco police were alert in defense of the shipowners' property, laggard in the defense of a union man's life.



Burton

The unions demanded, in addition to higher wages, control of their own hiring halls in order that they might voluntarily spread out the work; and bargaining on a coastwide rather than on a port-to-port basis. It was these issues which caused the 1934 strike which began on May 9 and ended on July 21 with presidential intercession. It was at this time that the cry, "Deport Bridges," first began to be heard.

IN THIS CONNECTION it is interesting to note that on March 4, 1935—less than a year after the strike—President Roosevelt had this to say of the American Merchant Marine, which was then receiving a government subsidy of $30,000,000 for carrying mail worth $3,000,000: "Reports which have been made to me by appropriate authorities in the Executive branch of the government have shown that some American shipping companies have engaged in practices and abuses which should and must be ended. Some of these have to do with the improper operating of subsidiary companies, *the payment of excessive* [*executive*] *salaries,* the engagement in business not directly a part of shipping and other abuses which have made for poor management, *improper use of profits* and scattered efforts."—(All italics are mine. D. T.). . . .

The "shape-up" and the "kick-back" have been eliminated in favor of a hiring hall controlled by the union. The "star gang" is no more. Instead of ten percent working and ninety percent remaining virtually idle, every union longshoreman is guaranteed work on a basis of sharing the work in absolute equality. Wages have been raised to $1 an hour straight time, $1.50 an hour overtime, with appropriate increases for "penalty cargo"—cargo which by reason of great health hazard and physical danger is more expensive to handle. San Pedro longshoremen average around $2,000 per year, based on a working week of between thirty and forty hours. Stevedores when occasionally working on penalty cargoes earn as much as $70 to $80 per week. For the entire Pacific Coast, the longshoremen average between $1,700 to $1,800 per year. *Since 1934 no longshoreman has ever been on relief!*

A survey of 217 representative longshoremen chosen at random from the Seattle-Portland district reveals an average yearly wage in 1938 of $1,750. In 1940 the average pay of San Francisco longshoremen was $2,550 per year. Half of the men are buying homes, and twenty-five percent of them own their homes outright. Practically all of them drive their own cars. The accident rate has steadily dropped. They are good, honest citizens earning decent livelihoods, contributing to the social, cultural, and economic welfare of their communities. Many of them are sending their children through college. All of this has been accomplished in six years among men who formerly were living under a system of hopeless terror and disunity, completely without any legal or union protection, on a salary which averaged sixty-six percent less than they receive at present. . . .

Harry Bridges was annually reelected to the presidency of his union. But the employers never gave up their Red cry. For three years the campaign against Harry Bridges continued, culminating in his deportation hearing before Dean of Harvard Law School James M. Landis on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay in the summer of 1939. He faced charges of membership in an organization advocating violent overthrow of the United States government.

In the course of the trial, at fabulous cost to the taxpayers and the shipowners, every act of his life in the United States was carefully reviewed. The alien, the Communist, the foreign agitator . . . was at last caught in the web of his own perfidy. Big business on the West Coast chuckled with anticipation, awaiting the day of his deportation and the dissolution of the union for which he worked.

Here are the men Prosecutor Shoemaker offered as government witnesses against the alien Bridges: Maj. Lawrence A. Milner, who publicly perjured himself on the stand and confessed to labor spying; John L. Leech, convicted in Toledo, Ohio, of cashing a forged money order, convicted in Los Angeles for frequenting a resort; Aaron Sapiro, disbarred in the New York Federal Court for jury tampering, indicted with Al Capone for racketeering; Eugene George Dietrich, dishonorably discharged from the US Navy; Theodore Marion Stark, who served thirteen months in a Washington Reformatory on a stolen car charge; John Ryan Davis, convicted and given a suspended sentence for embezzling $1,800 in union funds while business agent

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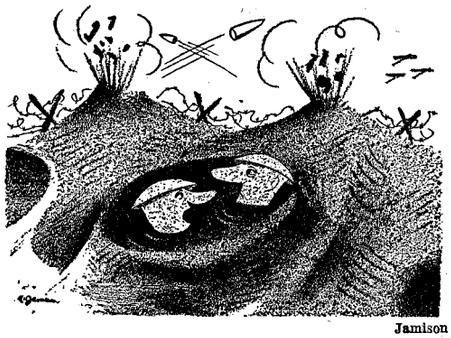


Jamison

"Senator Barkley says we needn't worry about convoys."

for the Sailors Union in Aberdeen, Wash. Incredible? Of course. True? Incontestably so.

Dean Landis, on Dec. 28, 1939, turned in his verdict: "The evidence therefore establishes neither that Harry R. Bridges is a member of, nor affiliated with, the Communist Party of the United States of America."

Complete vindication for all save the taxpayers who stood the expense of the trial; for all save the government witnesses who discredited themselves and covered the prosecution with shame; for all save those men and organizations which for seven years had hounded Bridges in violation both of morals and law.

Said Dean Landis of Bridges' testimony: "It was given not only without reserve, but vigorously as dogma and faiths of which the man was proud and which represented in his mind the aims of his existence. It was a fighting apologia that refused to temper itself to the winds of caution. . . . *It was unequivocal in its distrust of tactics other than those that are generally included within the concept of democratic methods.*"

Having made himself clear on the issue of Harry Bridges, the Dean turned to a dissection of prosecution witnesses. Of Major Milner, he wrote: "Milner's testimony in this proceeding is deserving of little, if any, credence." Of Leech: "In evasion, qualification and contradiction it is almost unique." Of Harper Knowles, head of the American Legion's Radical Research Committee and former executive secretary of the Associated Farmers: "He was neither a candid nor a forthright witness." Of Sapiro: "Sapiro's testimony possesses elements of incoherent improbability." Of Captain Keegan of the Portland police Red squad: "The conclusion is inescapable that his testimony is far from reliable. . . . Not only was Keegan's respect for an oath negligible, but he was again and again faced with testimony so variant from that which he had given that he was forced to alter his original story or to make its hollowness patent by the crudeness of his subsequent explanations." Of Larry Doyle, bearer of credentials from the ex-governors of California and Oregon, self-confessed labor spy and professional Red-hunter: "Doyle proved to be a problem in contumacy."

Thus, the collapse of the great Red trial against Harry Bridges. . . .

Harry Bridges is now thirty-nine years old. He was born in Australia of a family which held and still holds rather extensive real estate interests. His uncle is a member of Parliament. He was reared and educated a Catholic. As a boy he fell in love with the books of Jack London and took to the sea. He arrived in the United States April 20, 1920, paid his $8 head tax in San Francisco, and became a legal entrant.

He applied for his first papers, received them; in applying for his second papers he filed thirty-two days before the expiration of the filing period, although government officials claimed he was a few days late. A slip-up somewhere. Petty, bureaucratic immigration officials are famed for their shabby treatment of alien petitioners. Again Bridges applied for and received his first papers, becoming eligible for citizenship during the depth of the depression. Being unemployed most of the time, he lacked the twenty dollars necessary for his second papers. He was informed somewhat later that if he attempted to get his second papers, things would be made "so hot" for him he would wish he'd never tried. However, since his last deportation hearing, he again has tried unsuccessfully to become an American citizen.

His status is quite different from that of rich Americans who—while clinging to their American citizenship—flock to every country of Europe to live luxuriously at the expense of deflated foreign currencies, returning to America only when trouble threatens, and then reluctantly. In any event, his status is different from that of wealthy and titled Europeans who—retaining their foreign citizenship—enter the United States as refugees to infest the most expensive hotels, resorts, night clubs, and gambling establishments, while sighing and murmuring for the tragic fate of their countrymen across the Atlantic. His status, in short, is probably no different from that of 5,000,000 other aliens who have lately registered with the federal government.

Whatever the cause, to his own sorrow and to the sorrow of American labor—albeit to the great delight of employer groups—the man is not a citizen and probably cannot now obtain citizenship. It is worthy of comment that the same hypocritical individuals who attack Bridges for not having become a citizen are the same men who have moved heaven and earth to prevent him from acquiring citizenship. As an alien he is subject to trial and immediate deportation. As an alien he is denied all protections accorded to citizens when brought before the bar of justice.

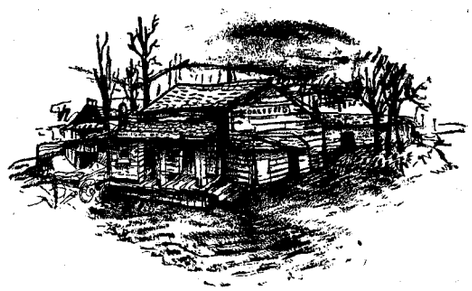
But to continue with Bridges, the man. He holds an honorable discharge as a quartermaster from the United States Geodetic Survey. He is married. He has a fifteen-year-old daughter. He has a twenty-year-old step-son who is a sergeant in the United States Army. His only possessions are a mortgaged automobile and a vacant lot in Australia. He gives too much of his money away. During the 1936 coastwide waterfront strike Bridges gave all of his salary to the strikers each week. His salary as president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union is $75 per week. Contrast this salary with the legendary incomes of corrupt labor leaders, and you have the true measure of Harry Bridges. . . .

NOW WHAT of the union he heads? What of this revolutionary organization which so hideously and subversively demands a living wage for the 35,000 workers at present affiliated with it? Considering the fact that there are labor unions whose officials have not permitted an election in twenty years, it is refreshing to discover that the ILWU elects officers annually. They are elected by the majority of absolutely secret ballots. At any time the union is tired of an officer, a petition signed by fifteen percent of the membership compels his immediate impeachment. He is out of office the moment the petition is presented, and draws no salary until his trial, during the course of which his guilt or innocence is determined. This clause was inserted at the request of Harry Bridges.

This process of democracy at work runs through every action of the union. Any act of the International Executive Board can be subjected to referendum by the entire union at the request of fifteen percent of the membership. All proposals which a negotiating committee is authorized to make to employers are first adopted by secret majority vote. Beyond such proposals the bargaining committee is not authorized to venture. No contract may be ratified without secret majority vote. Bridges has long argued that a union leader must share the hardships of a strike as well as the glories of victory: hence *neither he nor any other official of the union receives a penny of salary while the men are on strike.*

There is no racial, religious, or political discrimination within the union. Members include Americans, English, Russians, Negroes, Finns, Turks—every nationality in the world. Beyond any question the ILWU is the finest example of democratic trade unionism in America.

When confronted with such an organization, there are only two ways to destroy it: split the membership, or eliminate the leader. For seven years the attempt has been made by provocateurs and labor spies, yet the magnificent cohesion of the union has only increased. Hence, the leader must be destroyed. One attempt has failed miserably. Another is under way at this time. If the . . . hearings fail, there will be still others. For Harry Bridges is a dangerous man, as all honest and efficient men are dangerous.



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In spite of the complete legality, the genuine unselfishness, the enormous social benefits of his work, this man for seven years has been harassed. His rights of privacy have been violated. His telephone wires have been tapped. He has been trailed by detectives. He has been urged into dozens of compromising situations. He has refused fortunes in bribes. . . .

For months detectives have quizzed disgruntled unionists—and there was a disgruntled one even among the Twelve Apostles—seeking every detail of his personal life. He will be smeared economically, politically, morally. If the charges against him fail as signally as in his previous trial, still more money will be raised, still more detectives will be employed, still more hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars will be squandered. For his crime, as evidenced by the paychecks of his union members, is grave beyond measure. . . .

WHEN I READ the surveys of American fortunes, when I witness overwhelming financial power descend from father to son precisely as the entailed estates and titles of Europe descend, I realize more fully than ever how much Harry Bridges has given to America and how little he has taken from America. This man and his $75 weekly salary and his mortgaged car are very important to me for the typically American pattern they present. He is an immigrant, as all of us were immigrants at one time or another. Like most of us, he has made no fortune, profited by no man's toil, violated no law, betrayed no man or cause. But more patriotic than most of us, he is a sincere democrat, a genuine defender of America by his defense of that portion of the "ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed" third of our nation. . . . If he is deported as an undesirable alien, or when he dies, his daughter's only heritage will be the knowledge that 35,000 maritime workers, under the leadership of her father and in full conformity with the law of the land, advanced from degradation and poverty to that position of human dignity and economic sufficiency which is the aim of all free men.

We can spend a million—ten million—lives in defense of the American continent, yet they will have been wasted if those principles for which Harry Bridges stands and now is persecuted are overthrown. For in our whole land—vast in its resources, teeming in its industries, first in the world if you wish—there will be no single free man. . . .

It is not really the man Harry Bridges who matters at the . . . hearings, for his record will remain triumphantly behind him in the daily lives of the union he headed. And if the hearings turn out adversely for the defense, it will not be Harry Bridges who is deported, but the principles of American liberty. . . .

DALTON TRUMBO.

Mr. Trumbo's article is abridged from his pamphlet "Harry Bridges," published by the Hollywood Chapter of the League of American Writers.

IN YOUR HANDS

Last week we told you that unless we had $3,000 for the printer by Tuesday, April 8, the issue would not go to press. Thanks to our readers and friends, who contributed $1,958, and to our art auction, which netted $925, we were saved—for one week.

But next week is, if anything, even more critical. The printer is again on our necks. The paper man, the landlord are clamoring for payment. Every day we face a financial deadline. Will there be a NEW MASSES next week? Again the verdict is in your hands.

THE EDITORS

(Please fill out coupon on page 25)

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THE COMING TRIUMPH

Jefferson's and Lincoln's dreams ended in the nightmare of monopoly. A. B. Magil traces the growth of America's working class. The battle for democracy and the promise of the future.

This is the last in a series of four articles on the driving forces in the past development of American democracy in relation to the problems of the present and the future. The previous articles dealt with the period from the close of the Revolution to the end of the Reconstruction era, with special emphasis on the role of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln. NEW MASSES *presents these articles as a reply to those who seek to pervert the American tradition and thwart the effort to fulfill the promise of American democracy.*

IN THE year 1877 two events occurred which announced the coming of a new epoch in American life. In April of that year the last tattered banners of Reconstruction were lowered when President Rutherford B. Hayes, carrying out the terms of a deal which gave him the election over Tilden, withdrew federal troops from South Carolina and Texas, turning over their state governments to the representatives of the counter-revolutionary planters. In July 1877 the great railroad strike broke out, the first large-scale clash between capital and labor and the first in which federal troops were used in peacetime. These two apparently unrelated events signalized the end of one irrepressible conflict and the beginning of another. The troops which had guarded democracy for the Negro people and small white farmers of the South were sent to extinguish it for the workers of the North. It was a momentous symbol. Within a few short years the dominant industrial bourgeoisie had traversed the path from revolution to reaction and now bestrode the republic, a colossus of predatory power.

This was a major transformation. Hitherto it was the bourgeoisie, either as a whole or through its middle-class component, which had pushed forward the frontiers of bourgeois democracy in America. But in the period that opened after the Civil War the capitalist class became increasingly an anti-democratic force, seeking to narrow the area of popular liberty. The United States was witnessing the phenomenon which Karl Marx had noted in France in 1851:

> **The bourgeoisie recognized that all the weapons which it had forged against feudalism could have their points turned against itself; that all the means of education which it had created were rebels against its own civilization; that all the gods it had set up had deserted it. It became aware that the so-called civil liberties and instruments of progress were menaces to its own class domination.**

This changed attitude of the American ruling class was the product of a fundamental economic change. The democracy which was established by the first American Revolution was based on the ownership of property which, particularly in the form of farm property, was at that time widely distributed. In the struggle which the American people waged after the revolution under the leadership of Jefferson the central issue was whether democracy and political power were to be limited to the holders of large property, as the Federalists desired, or were to include as well the holders of small property, farmers and artisans. Throughout the whole of the period up to the Civil War the absence of any feudal heritage, the slow growth of industrial capitalism, and the expanding frontier made possible the continued dissemination of property in many hands. And within this favorable economic climate the efforts of the people, reaching new peaks in the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian eras, extended the scope of bourgeois democracy. It may be said that never before or since has any capitalist country achieved so close an approximation to economic, social, and political equality for the majority of its people as existed in the United States—outside of the South—during the three decades preceding the Civil War. Whitman's greatest poetry was written toward the end of this period; in contrast to his work after the Civil War, there is in this poetry the exuberance and self-confidence of the young democratic giant that was America, untouched as yet by the gaudy corruptions, the racking inner pains and disquietudes of later years.

PARADOXICALLY, the overthrow of the chief obstacle to further democratic advance, the slave system, also overthrew the basis for continuing that advance: small-owner economy. Industrial capitalism, which had been held in leash by the slave system, leaped forward with unprecedented speed and power, creating both an enormous concentration and centralization of capital in few hands and a large, growing class of propertyless wage-workers. At the same time the disappearance of the frontier—by 1890 the entire country up to the Pacific had been settled—closed that means for expanding the ownership of small property; on the contrary, many farmers began to lose their property through indebtedness and foreclosures. From 1880 to 1900 farm tenancy rose from 25.6 to 36.3 percent, and by the end of the century 31 percent of all American farms were mortgaged. The once vigorous middle classes, out of whom had sprung the industrial bourgeoisie, were reduced to a position of dependence. The dream of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln had ended in the nightmare of monopoly. And for the first time the antagonism between capitalism and democracy came nakedly into view.

This antagonism expressed itself primarily as a conflict between capital and labor. History quickly demonstrated that only the proletariat could replace the middle classes as the yeast of new democratic growth. For this was the class which played the decisive role in the industrial production which was spreading its dominion over the entire country. And this was the class which was most directly affected by the social consequences of the concentration of economic power and the subservience of government to big business. Moreover, the very conditions of capitalist production, by bringing large numbers of workers together, gave them the means to challenge the new despotism that was seeking to abridge democracy.

The activity of the working class, while immediately directed toward preserving and extending bourgeois democratic rights, necessarily also raised the question of a new economic foundation for democracy since the old one could never be retrieved. Thus, in the period that opened with the betrayal of the Negro people in the South and the violent assault on the great railroad strike, American society has developed under two opposing impulses. The drive of capital has been toward the contraction of democracy, the drive of labor toward its expansion. The consummation of capital's drive is fascism, a phenomenon of the monopoly or imperialist stage of capitalism. The consummation of labor's drive is the eradication of capitalism and the establishment of a new economic basis for democracy, socialism, or the cooperative ownership of productive property—the factories, land, and natural resources—by the workers and farmers. This qualitatively different and immeasurably higher type of democracy for the first time makes possible the realization for *all* the people of the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness which is the heart of the American dream.

THE SEVENTIES marked the turning point, when the era of free competition reached its peak and the transition to monopoly began. This was greatly accelerated by the economic storm which in 1873 broke over the United States and the entire capitalist world, the most severe crisis that capitalism had known up to that time. Two years after the railroad strike of 1877 the first trust, Standard Oil, was formed. American capitalism had come of age. In the nineties there began the export of capital, one of the chief stigmata of imperialism, and in 1898 this country fought its first imperialist war. The organization of the United States Steel Corp. in 1901 may be said to have marked the full emergence of the epoch of imperialism (monopoly capitalism), which on the economic plane is the complete negation of the democracy of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln.

Simultaneous with this process the capital-

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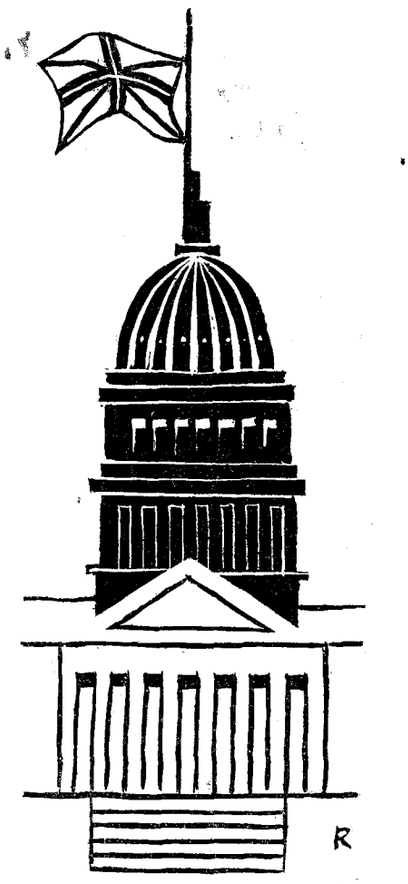
ist class developed new legal and extra-legal devices that fortified its power by effecting fundamental changes in the character of American democracy. The first of these was a constitutional change: the smuggling into the Fourteenth Amendment, adopted in 1868 for the ostensible purpose of guaranteeing the rights of Negroes, of a clause safeguarding property rights. Under this clause, invoked for the first time in 1877, the Supreme Court was for many years to protect corporations against social legislation enacted by the states. Even liberal justices have accepted without a murmur this interpretation of the "due process" clause; it was not challenged till 1938 in a dissent by Justice Black in a life insurance case.

Other oppressive measures were more directly concerned with labor. The construction of armories in large cities dates from the railroad strike of 1877 when it was found that the militia encountered difficulties in breaking the struggle because of the lack of adequate bases of operations. After the strike various state legislatures passed conspiracy laws designed to outlaw the right to organize. And during the next great wave of labor struggles in the eighties, culminating in the historic May Day strike for the eight-hour day, three additional innovations in the technique of anti-democratic repression were introduced: the anti-labor injunction, the labor frameup (the Haymarket case), and the use of formerly innocuous city ordinances against trespassing, obstructing the streets, inciting to riot, etc., in order to suspend civil liberties. In 1892 there came a fourth innovation: state martial law to break strikes (the Coeur d'Alene mine strike). Previously militia used against labor had been under the direction of civil authorities and they could not directly suppress civil liberties. In 1894, in the great Pullman strike led by Eugene V. Debs, head of the American Railway Union, a most important new wrinkle was added: the use of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law against labor. In this strike, too, federal troops were for the first time employed without the consent of the state authorities (Governor Altgeld of Illinois, who was sympathetic to the strikers, strongly protested this action). The role that the government was playing was further emphasized the following year when the same Supreme Court which had upheld the conviction of Debs for violating an injunction vetoed an income tax law passed by Congress.

While most of the strikes of the seventies, eighties, and nineties were lost, they taught invaluable lessons to the workers and helped fashion the trade unions as new instruments of democracy. The National Labor Union founded in 1866, gave way to the Knights of Labor, and this in turn was supplanted by the American Federation of Labor, while the railroad workers organized separately in their brotherhoods. On the political field, however, the workers were slow to find their independent way, despite the fact that it was in this country that the first labor party in the world was organized in 1828. To this day there is a considerable gap between the economic and political action of the American working class. There are a number of historic reasons for this which I have not the space to discuss except to point out that the relatively weak development of the class struggle before the Civil War as a result of the slow industrial growth, the wide distribution of small property, and the opportunities which the expanding frontier offered for escape from the working class set the mold for middle-class illusions which were not easily overcome. This is a striking example of the well known phenomenon that ideas often persist in human consciousness long after the disappearance of the material conditions which gave them birth.

The most notable attempt at independent political action by labor was in the municipal elections in 1886. On the crest of the strike movement local labor parties were formed which won encouraging successes. The most important of these was in New York City where Henry George, candidate for mayor of the United Labor Party, came in second, ahead of the Republican candidate, Theodore Roosevelt. Frederick Engels, in a letter to the German revolutionary immigrant, Frederick Sorge, emphasized the significance of this election and urged all Socialists to participate in the organization of a mass workers' party. Unfortunately, the Socialist movement which emerged after the Civil War limited its appeal largely to German immigrants; and it was led by dogmatic sectarians whom Marx and Engels repeatedly criticized. Socialist ideas, however, were by no means alien to America. Marx himself pointed out in 1847 that "Socialism and Communism did not originate in Germany, but in England, France, and North America." And it was in this country that the principal experiments in utopian Communism were organized. The Communist colony established in 1825 at New Harmony, Ind., by Robert Owen, and the Communist communities of the forties are as much a part of the American tradition as the writings of Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, and Margaret Fuller, who participated in the most famous of these experiments, Brook Farm. Communal living has also been practiced by the Shakers and other religious sects, as well as to some extent by the pioneer settlers of America, a fact noted by President Roosevelt in his address of Aug. 18, 1937, at Roanoke Island, N. C. Thus the roots of Communism go back to the origins of our democracy and of America as a nation. Only with the development of industrial capitalism, however, does socialism, the first stage of Communism, become economically and politically feasible; more: the categorical imperative for escape from the deepening abyss of poverty, war, and fascism.



Rodney

Except for the 1886 elections, political insurgence in the post-Civil War period generally assumed a petty-bourgeois form. Both the National Labor Reform and the Greenback parties were largely middle-class in program and leadership, and labor played in them a weak and subordinate role. The most significant movement of this type developed among the farmers as a protest against the encroachments of monopoly, culminating in the People's Party of the nineties. This movement, which united the impoverished farmers of the South and West, marked the beginning of that agrarian ferment which has ever since been part of American life, erupting fiercely in times of stress. The Populists stirred up the country, fought for many progressive measures, and left behind a positive heritage of anti-monopoly struggle. But though they were branded Socialists or Communists by their enemies, essentially they were an echo of the past, expressing the opposition of the little owners to the big and seeking to turn back history to the small-farmer economy of the pre-Civil War era. Populism demonstrated in action that the middle class could no longer be the vanguard of the democratic forces, but could play a consistently progressive role only under the leadership of the working class. The later history of some of the Populist leaders emphasized that in the imperialist epoch, unless the middle class allies itself with the workers, it can become the tool of reaction. For example, the "Great Commoner," William Jennings Bryan, at the 1924 convention of the Democratic Party lined up with the forces of the Ku Klux Klan; the following year he gave an exhibition of bigotry gone rampant at the Scopes trial. And Thomas E. Watson, whom the

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Populists nominated for Vice-President in 1896 and who was the presidential candidate of what was left of the party in 1904 and 1908, became in later years the chief apostle of white supremacy and Ku Kluxism in the United States Senate.

THE EMERGENCE of the modern labor movement after the Civil War also created the basis for the development in a new and more permanent form of the internationalism that is part of our democratic tradition. It was, in fact, the Civil War which served to link the internationalist aspect of American bourgeois democracy with the new proletarian internationalism. Shortly after the formation in London of the International Workingmen's Association (First International) it sent an address written by its outstanding leader, Karl Marx, to Abraham Lincoln congratulating him on his re-election in 1864. The address pointed to the major revolutionary implication of the Civil War: "The workingmen of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American anti-slavery war will do for the working class." The Dies committee ought undoubtedly to be interested in Lincoln's reply, delivered through the American ambassador in London, Charles Francis Adams, since it caused Marx to write Engels: "The fact that Lincoln has replied to us so courteously and to the 'Bourgeois Emancipation Society' so rudely and purely formally has made the *Daily News* so angry that it did *not* print the reply to us. . . . The difference between L's reply to us and to the bourgeois has made such a stir here that the 'Clubs' in the West End are shaking their heads over it."

The economic basis of bourgeois internationalism was the breakdown of feudal self-sufficiency and isolation and the creation of the world market. But this likewise introduced the negation of internationalism: the competitive struggle among the capitalists of the various countries for a larger share of the market. At the time of the American and French revolutions this contradiction had not yet sufficiently developed to nullify the common aims that bound together the most democratic elements of both countries. But even in the thinking and acts of so great a democrat and internationalist as Jefferson there emerges at times the conflict of interests between the revolutionary bourgeoisie of America and France. With the growth of capitalism these conflicts among the various countries grew, becoming enormously accentuated in the epoch of imperialism. It was the working class that inherited the task of carrying forward the internationalist tradition of the American revolution by providing the social basis for the only consistent internationalism, the only true brotherhood of peoples. It is significant that in 1867, at the second convention of the National Labor Union, the country's first important national federation of trade unions, its leader, William Sylvis, and W. I. Jessup of the carpenters' union urged affiliation with the International Workingmen's Association. The convention failed to affiliate, but it adopted a resolution expressing sympathy and promising cooperation "to the organized working men of Europe."

Concerning the first convention of the National Labor Union, held the previous year, Marx had written to his friend, Dr. Kugelmann: "I was very pleased with the American Workers' Congress at Baltimore which took place at the same time as the congress of the International Workingmen's Association at Geneva. The slogan there was organization for struggle against capital, and curiously enough, most of the demands which I drew up for Geneva, were also put forward there by the correct instinct of the workers." In another letter to Kugelmann, Marx commented approvingly on the third convention of the National Labor Union, pointing to the fact that "it treated working women with complete equality." Sylvis communicated regularly with the International, and in 1869 the National Labor Union elected A. C. Cameron a delegate to the international congress at Basle. And so, shocking as it may be to Bill Green, John P. Frey, and the Department of Justice, the founders of the modern American trade union movement rubbed elbows, politically speaking, with the founder of scientific Communism, and the forerunner of the American Federation of Labor established friendly relations with the forerunner of the Communist International.

THE WORLD WAR marked a major change for American and world capitalism. The contradictions within and without each country had reached a point where they could be resolved temporarily only in catastrophic fashion. The war of 1914-18 and the economic collapse that began in 1929 were attempts at solution; they were the most drastic manifestations of that violence which has come to dominate capitalist life. With the war began the *general crisis* of capitalism—as distinct from the cyclical economic crises—that hardening of the system's arteries which is the omen of death.

All this has had the most profound effect on the development of democracy in America and throughout the world. For it is in this period that the most important contradiction of capitalism, that between capital and labor, is strained to the breaking point. As a result, we have, on the one hand, the crystallization of fascist tendencies in all capitalist countries, reaching completion in the imposition of fascist dictatorships in Italy, Germany, and a number of other countries; and, on the other, the accentuated struggle under the leadership of the working class of the democratic peoples of the entire capitalist and colonial world, achieving its first victory in the establishment of socialism in Russia.

In the United States, as elsewhere, the anti-democratic tendencies maturing in the womb of monopoly capitalism first emerged in fascist and semi-fascist form during the World War. State capitalism, that is, the fusion of government and finance-capital, was greatly accelerated in an effort to speed up war production. The War Labor Board sought to prevent and break strikes by coordinating the workers under government controls. At the same time the most far-reaching suspension of the Bill of Rights in the nation's history was effected by the Espionage and Sedition Acts and various state measures. Instead of civil liberties being restored after the war, the anti-democratic drive gained new momentum in the Red raids of Attorney General Palmer. From that time on the Department of Justice has acted under both Republican and Democratic Presidents as a major repressive agency. It was in the aftermath of the war, too, that the employers' associations, in an effort to crush the strike movement of 1919, launched the greatest open-shop offensive in the history of the country, often resorting to violent vigilantism to gain their ends. And the war period also saw the birth of America's first semi-fascist terror organization, the modern Ku Klux Klan, which antedated both the fascisti of Mussolini and Hitler's storm troops.

The ugliest manifestations of incipient fascism subsided somewhat during the booming twenties, but with the economic crash they emerged with renewed vigor. New terroristic groups, like the Silver Shirts and the Black Legion, came on the scene, their emphasis primarily anti-labor, but also inciting hatred against Jews, Negroes, and Catholics. The demagogues of fascism, Father Coughlin and Huey Long, sought to exploit Populist traditions and illusions to build mass movements in the interest of big business. The oppressive conditions in the South, where the Negro people and large numbers of whites are little better than serfs, likewise fed anti-democratic tendencies in all parts of the country. And always the march of monopoly scattered ever more widely the fascist seed.

Fascism is capitalism's reply to the pressure of democracy in conditions of pervading crisis. But completed fascism does not necessarily occur in one swoop; it may develop by stages and very irregularly. The Roosevelt program in its first phase was a capitalist effort to deflect the urge toward democracy by granting a few concessions to the people while strengthening the power of big capital over them. This was the meaning of NRA. It collapsed under democracy's impact—labor's struggle to organize and improve its conditions. In the second phase of the New Deal, from 1935 to the fall of 1939, President Roosevelt, impelled by the pressure of labor and the people as a whole, sought a compromise by which the stability of capitalism would be maintained through social reforms; these were opposed by the leading monopolists, but accepted by many other capitalists. In the struggle that was precipitated the common folk of America were able to utilize the federal government to a partial extent to advance the battle of democracy against fascism. And in this battle the people built the most powerful organizations in their history: the trade unions, particularly the historic movement for

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Gardner Rea

"Why aren't you over at the Coudert Committee testifying?"

industrial unionism known as the CIO, the Communist Party, the National Negro Congress, the American Youth Congress, and many others. These are the materials out of which a new people's party is being fashioned. In contrast to the La Follette movement in 1924, which was formed around a single middle-class individual and collapsed with his defeat, the new party will have as its core the workers in the trade unions.

With the outbreak of the second imperialist war Roosevelt deserted the camp of democracy and took with him some trade union leaders and spineless liberals. But though it may stumble at times and find it difficult to see the way, the movement of the masses continues unbroken. The war has become the chief lever of fascist development; hence the fight for democracy is necessarily a fight for peace. And in every field of activity the Communists, like the followers of Jefferson in the early years of the republic, like the Abolitionists in the years before the Civil War, have been the vanguard of democracy, rousing and organizing the people, pointing to the goal toward which the democratic struggle is inevitably leading.

As we look back over the expanse of years since our first revolution, we can discern four major stages in the development of American democracy. In the first, from the close of the revolution till the end of Van Buren's administration in 1841, democracy developed through the struggle of the middle classes, predominantly agrarian, against the efforts of the wealthy merchant capitalists to restrict its limits. In the second period, from the forties till the end of the Reconstruction era, democracy advanced through the opposition of the entire bourgeoisie, big and little, to the slave system, though it was the middle classes that gave the impetus to this movement. In the third period, from Reconstruction till the World War, capitalism was fundamentally transformed from a competitive system into one dominated by monopoly; and industrial capital fused with banking capital to form finance-capital, marking the epoch of imperialism. The bourgeoisie was converted into an anti-democratic force, while the working class became the new vehicle of democratic advance through its struggles against the capitalist class. In the final period, from the World War to the present day, the general crisis and decay of capitalism begins. The conflict betwen capital and labor is greatly intensified, with each seeking allies among the rural and urban middle classes. In this period democracy and anti-democracy move, whether consciously or not, toward opposite fulfilments, the one in Socialism, the other in fascism. Peace and war are expressions of these two opposing drives.

The great figure of American democracy for the period from the end of Reconstruction till the close of the World War was not Theodore Roosevelt, or William Jennings Bryan, or Woodrow Wilson, but the Socialist and trade unionist, Eugene Victor Debs. For Debs, like Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln, represented the future of America, the forward movement of the people toward new democratic horizons. And I am confident that history will likewise show that the major figure of American democracy from the World War to the present day, the man who has most completely expressed the continuity of the great tradition, is the Communist and trade unionist, Earl Browder.

WHO WILL WIN in this gigantic contest between democracy and anti-democracy? The answer may be found in the history of the past. America is the country in which capitalism has had its golden age. In no other land did it develop under such favorable conditions, nowhere did it have so large an opportunity to bring security, peace, and happiness to the people. Yet this is the country in which millions of unemployed, the sharecroppers of the South, the lynching of Negroes, the despotism of a Henry Ford, the ruthless advance of war economy, and a thousand other signs testify how monumentally capitalism has failed. And the failure of American capitalism is the indictment of capitalism everywhere. But the promise of America, the wealth of America, the achievements of its people tell us that these conditions need not be. The victory of the Russian people tell us that they need not be. America shall yet in Whitman's phrase, "build for mankind." The years that have passed since 1776 speak with all the tongues of history of the coming triumph of democracy.

A. B. MAGIL.

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Assault on Yugoslavia

OUR feeling about the attack on Yugoslavia and Greece ranges from disgust to anger. It is a spectacle of simple brutality. Especially in the wake of the first days of another springtime, the very thought of what is going on in southeastern Europe is sickening. The way the capitalist press has taken Yugoslavia to its bosom, as in the case of Greece—this also is sickening for all those who remember how little the press of our country reflected the valiant struggles of these two peoples against their own dictatorships. How eagerly the press, and all the institutions of capitalist life embrace these two nations the moment they see some advantage for the grand strategy of their war. Morally, it is the exact counterpart of the greasy satisfaction with which Hitler and Ribbentrop welcomed the capitulation of Messrs. Cvetkovitch and Cincar-Markovitch, the former Yugoslav ministers who tried to sell their country for a mess of pottage. But no one has to be debunked about Hitler: he is deliberately humbling proud peoples, because they demonstrated what is really on the minds and hearts of the common folk of Europe. For anyone who knows the kind of men that are running this war in Washington and London, for anyone who stands on a picket line in this country, or faces the grilling of a Rapp or Coudert, for him it is only hypocrisy to read the well-lubricated strophes of the morning editorial page. It is this spectacle which convinces honest people, whether in Serbia or San Francisco, that before this war is over only a complete sweep of the old, decrepit order will bring cleanliness back into the springtime air.

IT IS TOO EARLY to estimate the military aspects of the conflict. It is generally granted that Hitler's mechanized forces will have little difficulty in the plains of Slovenia and Croat-Slavonia. The obstacles will come, if they prove to be obstacles, in the mountainous terrain of southern Serbia. Already the main strategy of the Nazis is to blitzkrieg the big cities from the air, to destroy communications down the Vardar river valleys, to cut down from the Bulgarian border along the Struma river, and prevent contact between Yugoslav and Greek forces. If Mussolini has anything left in his armies after the disastrous debacle in Ethiopia, an Italian offensive in Albania is called for. One interesting problem is whether the Bulgarian army is participating in this action: it would not be unlikely since the forty-mile corridor which separates Bulgaria from the Aegean Sea was taken from her and granted to Greece by the old men of Versailles. At the moment it seems that the Turks are not becoming involved. This is evidently a rebuff to British wishes, and gives the Turks time.

British censorship (there is a censorship, you know) now reveals that a substantial British force of Australians and New Zealanders—reputedly a quarter of a million men—has been landing in Greece since the first days of March. The British are probably bringing up troops from eastern Africa also, although they are pinned down by the appearance of German mechanized divisions in Libya, where General Wavell was forced to yield Benghazi. President Roosevelt is reported to be lifting the ban on American shipping through the Red Sea, an effort to assist British communications, which will now be under the strain of a new, enlarged war zone.

The Yugoslav army is supposed to be an excellent one. Undoubtedly there will be an active participation by the population, with guerrilla action in the hills. The initiative is Hitler's and the odds are in his favor. He must win quickly, whatever the cost, and it will probably be substantial. If German troops are bogged down indefinitely, that would be a real turn in the war: anything less than a clear cut victory for German arms would mean a long-range defeat. Hitler is gambling, in the sense that he expected to win the Balkans hands down. And Churchill is gambling even more, taking even longer chances involving the sacrifice of 250,000 lives to bleed the Nazis and gain time.

In the White House, at Wilhelmstrasse, at Downing Street there is a glint in the eyes of the hardfaced men. Their pulses quicken at the prospect of the warfare. In the hearts of honest, humble folk everywhere, anger is growing slowly to replace disgust.

"Methinks It Will Not Come"

TWO men spoke to labor last week, two men in different circumstances, antagonists in the past, antagonists now in the face of the great labor struggles surging through the land. They represent the contending sides of an issue—whether the labor movement can grow and advance its organization at a time when Washington has decided to take the nation into war.

John L. Lewis spoke for labor. The coal owners, he said during the protracted wage negotiations, "continue to haggle, rejecting *in toto* every proposal. . . ." Like "certain other individuals throughout the country" they try to "create the impression that it is the patriotic duty of all men and women who work for a living to continue at work under any conditions, with or without a union, as the employer may elect . . . as long as he may grow fat and have his girth increased with the fullness of these government contracts under his belt." Lewis paused. "We don't think so," he said. "We don't think so."

William Knudsen spoke for the employers, for the administration, for all those who are worried by labor's militancy. He attacked "radical" union leaders, by which he acknowledged labor's *militant* leadership. "The problem is to hold the rise of wages in proportion to the rise in living costs. . . ." He did not add that the cost of living is rising and must, as the war program develops, rise still further. The notion that labor has the inherent right to raise its standard of living as profits are being made by the capitalist class never occurs to the former chairman of General Motors. And he did not suggest limiting profits to conform to a reasonable standard of living.

"I *do not* believe," he continued, "that legislation against strikes is necessary or *enforceable.*" The italics are ours, and the italics tell an important story. For the spokesmen of the employers and the administration thereby pay tribute to the power of the labor movement, its anger at the idea that anyone at this late date can rob it of its strike weapon. "Let us settle the disputes, large and small, around the table, and keep the plant going. . . ." To which Lewis replied—so long as the employers recognize collective bargaining, well and good. But, he added: "We are not going to follow this new formula that seems to have been discovered by the Mediation Board in Washington when they wire strikers to go back to work and bust their strike and then come to Washington to mediate for the remnants of it."

THE CIO has refused to retreat. Instead it has gone forward in the spirit of its convention last November. It has defied governmental threats to outlaw strikes. It has defied employer-violence, and has thereby given impetus to a great organizing drive not only for CIO but also for the AFL. In the case of the Allis-Chalmers plant in Milwaukee, the CIO won an agreement reinstating the discharged workers, and arbitration of wages on the premise that they will be raised. This was the tactic which the transport workers in New York followed. It is a method which brings results, and its results are contagious. Strike action by the coal miners, the backbone of the organized working class, promises to break down the differential between northern and southern wage scales—a victory of historic meaning. Wages have been raised a dollar a day, vacations are now written into the contract—a tribute to Lewis' skill in negotiation.

As a result, the steel workers have forced the United States Steel Corp. to get postponement of a threatened strike by the promise that wage increases would be made retroactive. In view of the fact that Mr. Roosevelt himself, as Adam Lapin indicated in NEW MASSES of March 25, advised Benjamin Fairless, president of Carnegie-Illinois Company, principal subsidiary of US Steel, to deny wage increases only a few weeks ago, this too is meaningful. And then there are the 88,000 Ford workers, cracking the last big citadel of the open shop.

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Labor has been fighting for economic needs, for bread, for job security. But there are definite political overtones to its economic struggles. The overtones are there for labor leaders of the Hillman variety whose policies have been voted down by marching picket lines. And there is worry in Washington. Poll-tax congressmen, elected to their sinecures by denying democracy to the citizens of the South, are bellowing in Congress. The administration maneuvers, taking a more cautious line than those rabid congressmen who are demanding a frontal assault on the unions, death penalties for the workers. "Let me say to any statesman who holds these views," said John L. Lewis, "that the time is not here yet, and methinks, it will not come. . . ."

Spies on Parade

WHERE is the "new evidence" that Attorney General Jackson promised when the administration decided to try Harry Bridges for a second time? Hearings in the present trial, designed to deport Bridges by proving that he belongs, or had belonged, to an organization seeking to "overthrow the government by force or violence," opened on March 31. Not an iota of "new evidence" has been introduced. As in the first trial, held in 1939, the prosecution's witnesses are a shabby lot. One of them, Ezra Chase, has been forced to admit a record as a labor spy. Another, Ben Gitlow, was expelled from the Communist Party long ago for anti-labor activities. All the witnesses claim to be former CP members; it is on the basis of this claim that they dare to pose as "authorities," repeating reaction's demonstrable lie that the Communist Party advocates force and violence. Gitlow's yarns haven't yet reached the fabulous height of the "jewels from Moscow" story which he told the Dies committee last year, but they are no less irresponsible. In his three days' testimony, Gitlow tried to label as "Red" not only Bridges but all other progressive individuals and organizations. Objections of Bridges' counsel are instantly overruled by Judge Sears, who has also waived all constitutional guarantees because "this isn't a court of justice, it is a mere judicial procedure."

Dalton Trumbo, in his article on page 10 of this issue, discusses the long background of this trial, which is another in the employers' efforts to "get" a brilliantly successful union organizer. Joining in those efforts, the administration follows an unscrupulous, if not illegal course. It is unconstitutional ("double jeopardy") to try a man twice on the same charge. It is unconstitutional to try him under an *ex post facto* law—one which was passed after the alleged offense was committed—as Bridges is being tried under the Alien Registration Act of 1940. But "getting" Bridges in this manner is important to the administration, and not only because he is a powerful labor leader. The trial is also being used to promote the administration's savage drive on

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APM's Spring Song

"IT'S GREAT to be alive in the spring," sang Paul Robeson in Mecca Temple Sunday afternoon. It was a new "Spring Song" by Earl Robinson, full of gladness and heartbreak. The song tells of the young man who wants so much to live, but faces the prospect of being sent off to die in war. And 5,000 men and women, listening in that hushed hall, felt down to their roots how great it was to be alive in the spring and how terrible to have it all blighted by war.

The great Negro baritone's singing—he also sang "Joe Hill," "Peat-Bog Soldiers," "Jim Crow," "Get Out and Stay Out of War"—brought to a focus of emotional intensity the meaning of the historic two-day People's Meeting called by the American Peace Mobilization. The faces in the audience were like a map of America. They were the faces of factory workers, office workers, farmers, teachers, writers, and ordinary people of all sorts from almost every state in the union. And they had come to unite their separate strengths in a powerful people's movement for peace. Future historians may come to regard this gathering as a momentous turning point. True, this movement is still in its beginnings, and it faces gigantic problems. But the men and women who gathered in New York on this twenty-fourth anniversary of America's entrance into the first imperialist conflict were no little sect of zealots; they constituted a true cross-section of the common people of the country. They voiced what was in the hearts of the overwhelming majority: the yearning for peace and security. Their words took shape in a clear program and they fashioned the instruments to bring that program to America's millions.

There were 4,225 regular delegates at the meeting and 748 elected observers. Particularly impressive was the trade union representation—1,717 from the unions, constituting the single largest group. A colorful contingent came from Michigan; it included Ford strikers and elected delegates from a number of locals of the United Auto Workers, CIO. The participation of so many trade unionists is of vast significance; it means that, unlike all previous American peace movements, this one has as its core the organized workers. And in the speech of Reid Robinson, a vice-president of the CIO, labor challenged the home-grown war promoters and stranglers of democracy.

There were no blurred issues at this people's meeting. From the keynote address of Rev. John A. Thompson of Oklahoma, national chairman of the American Peace Mobilization, through the panel discussions and general sessions, the meeting displayed a realistic grasp of the major questions before the people. The delegates struck hard at the use of naval convoys, at the transfer of merchant ships to Britain, and at other acts of war being planned by the Roosevelt-Willkie administration. And the kind of peace that is to the advantage of the people was sharply distinguished from the spurious appeasement peace advocated by such men as Colonel Lindbergh.

The ringing declaration to the country, which the meeting adopted, contains a seven-point program defining objectives for which all progressives can work. It calls for getting out and staying out of Word War II, for defense and improvement of living standards, for the strengthening of constitutional liberties. It opposes attacks on free education, demands equal rights for Negroes, and an end to anti-Semitism. "Let our foreign policy wage peace," it declares, and specifies: "For the friendliest relations with the peoples of Latin America, based on their right to fully resist the exploitation of American monopoly; no help to the foes of China within or without, but real aid to United China's struggle for freedom; genuine independence for Puerto Rico and the Philippines; friendly relations with the Soviet Union to prevent further extension of war." And the declaration urges a people's peace "without indemnities, without annexations, based upon the right of all peoples in subjugated or colonial countries to determine their own destinies."

With this program the APM joins with the People's Convention in England and with the underground fighters for peace in Germany and Italy in common bonds of struggle. The great possibilities that exist are attested even by the enemies of peace. On the very eve of the People's Meeting Raymond Clapper, Scripps-Howard commentator, searched his soul in an effort to explain the strange phenomenon that despite the government's active war measures, "there is every indication of strong public reluctance against going more deeply into the war." And Dorothy Thompson wailed: "This war is not popular in the United States. Making America an arsenal for democracy [President Roosevelt's phrase] is not really popular." Yet at the same time, says Miss Thompson, "This country is as anti-Nazi as any in the world." She considers this a contradiction—which it isn't—and seeks a solution in bigger and better demagogy: more precise definition by the British and American governments of war and peace aims.

But genuine peace aims mean a foreign policy that eschews war and imperialist ambitions. They mean the kind of program that was adopted by the People's Meeting. And increasingly the search for peace is coming to mean a new people's party that will establish government of the people, by the people, for the people. Today anguished millions still grope for this path, but we are confident that sooner or later they will find it in America and in all countries.

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the foreign born. Progressives recognize both these tactics as part of the attempt to split and smear organized labor. In this case the tactic isn't working. Bridges' union, the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen, has answered the attack on its president. CIO President Philip Murray has urged the defense of Bridges, and other CIO unions and leaders are pressing his case. They know their stake in constitutional guarantees—for labor's rights, the foreign born, and political minorities.

"Mental Rickets"

A SINGLE indication of what war means to a people, aside from sheer physical devastation, comes in a United Press dispatch from London reporting a threatened "epidemic of mental rickets" among children. Wartime disruption of daily life, even more than bombs, is held accountable for the children's mental demoralization. Juvenile crime has sharply increased with the letdown in school routine, lack of normal attention from parents, and the general feeling of insecurity. In some localities, thirty percent of housebreaking and shopbreaking cases are blamed on children. According to a social worker quoted in the UP dispatch, these law violations "are a question of juvenile neurosis and require psychological treatment in many cases. Many children, unless treated soon, will be stunted emotionally and mentally." The dispatch also reports that the results of most government surveys of the war's effect on children have been witheld from publication. What has been allowed to get by the censorship is, we may assume, only a small part of a tragic truth. And that truth, in turn, is just one proof of a far larger, all-important fact—that the people who have had no part in the making of this war are most horribly victimized by it.

Indelicate?

DR. GALLUP'S nose-counters have undertaken to answer an interesting question: why aren't more babies being born? They got the reply—the high cost of living. According to the Gallup survey sixty-eight percent of the people consider that not less than three children are necessary to the "ideal family." Just one in a hundred thought an "only child" was enough. Yet the experts estimate that more than sixty percent of America's families are either childless or have less than three children. When the Gallup pollers asked people why this was so, fifty-seven percent of them answered "not enough money." Five percent more said, "uncertainty of the future—particularly economic uncertainty." It is noticeable that the desire for more children was expressed in the poorest as well as average income groupings—but that the latter also were thwarted by the cost involved. In many cases women were kept childless by the necessity of working outside the home. Meanwhile: "If present birth and death rates continue, the population . . . will fail to maintain its numbers by about four percent per generation," says Halbert L. Dunn of the Census Bureau.

Very little publicity has been given this latest poll of Dr. Gallup's. The New York *Times* carried it in an early edition of April 4 and dropped it later. Do the bigwigs of the press consider babies an indelicate subject? Or is it news of poverty that's unfit to print?

Student Conference

THROUGH the initiative of the American Youth Congress, delegates representing sixty-three colleges from fifteen states gathered at Harvard several days ago to discuss how best to preserve democracy in education. The young people expressed widely divergent views on many subjects; but on the question of academic freedom and the need to encourage and spread progressive ideas, they were solidly united. Red-baiting evidently has little attraction for them. For these delegates took the word "democracy" with great seriousness; to them it meant the broadest freedom for all to participate in discusssions and decisions. In these days of press and radio smears, of "investigations" and witch hunts, which under the banner of "democracy" utterly deny all democratic precepts, the example set by students was indeed heartening.

The conference set up a permanent council to "carry forward the crusade for democratic education." The organization was specifically to be open to all students "regardless of economic status, race, color, sex, religious or political opinion." It recognized as the main enemy of education those groups like the Rapp-Coudert committee which would purge the schools and colleges of anyone not committed to war and reaction, not eager to cut budgets and transform educational institutions into military training centers. In addition, the Council endorsed the April 23 student action against war, and urged affiliates to participate. And so, even though the Council did not take any direct stand on the question of war, the endorsement of the peace demonstration gave further evidence that youth as a whole rejects the war hysteria fed to them from all sides.

Good News

FROM only a minute section of the press do you get the good news of a popular victory for free elections. Yet there were two such, and definitely important ones, in Vermont and New Hampshire recently. Both state legislatures voted down bills designed to rule the Communist Party off the ballot. In the Vermont Senate the bill got just one vote—but that was on the third reading, after the electorate had had time to make its protest felt. The measure was a kind that is becoming stereotyped — similar bills are pending in twenty-five state legislatures—in phraseology and intent. It did not mention the Communist Party directly; it spoke instead of a "subversive" party (some bills in other states refer to "force and violence"). The fact that such references to the Communist Party are exactly contrary to truth won't prevent the bills' sponsors from using them to disfranchise the Communists and other anti-war, pro-labor groups. This the people of Vermont and New Hampshire have prevented. The result of their action should hearten good democrats in all other states.

Mexico and Colombia

WE HEARD no cry of indignation last week from American liberals so-called, when the United States persuaded the Mexican government to grant the use of her air and seaplane bases to American armed forces. Nor have any committees been formed thus far, or funds raised, balls and banquets arranged because little Panama some weeks ago gave the United States landing fields on top of the Canal Zone which we have been leasing from Panama for a long time. Yet in both these cases, a foreign power, is, to speak very bluntly, enforcing its will against two smaller powers. On the face of it, the arrangements are reciprocal; all the legal formalities are observed. In reality, and it is the reality that counts, the United States is "spreading the eagle," converting the Caribbean into an American lake. It may be argued that such steps are necessary for its own security, but the average Mexican, whose difficulties result largely from foreign control of his natural resources, will gaze up at American planes casting a shadow over his land and ask: what price protection?

Down in Colombia, a series of electoral contests, have just been concluded, which reveal, in their own way, the depth of popular opposition to the program of hemispheric cooperation. The Conservative Party continued to lose ground: the two provincial legislatures which it still controls are important coffee producing areas, but they are only two out of fourteen. The real struggle has developed within the Liberal Party, which is the dominant, governing party in the country. The Liberals were divided into *"gobiernistas"* and *"lopistas"*—the latter taking their name from Dr. Alfonso Lopez. He is a former president of Colombia, and as our editorial for March 4 indicated, has spent the last few months

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campaigning against cooperation with Wall Street. He has projected a program of native industralization, opposed any effort to force the people to pay for the crisis. Of the eighty-two Liberal Party deputies, as compared with fifty Conservatives, the *"lopistas"* seem to have gained at least forty-eight (possibly fifty-five), that is a majority of the Liberal deputies although not yet a majority of the Chamber. The Lopez comeback has important implications for the presidential elections next year: he is now in a position to name, or at least help determine the presidential candidate of the Liberal Party. Should his anti-imperialist campaign intensify and gather strength, big things are likely to happen in this strategically important South American nation.

Fascist Emissary Sikorski

WE DO not know what urgent matters of state bring to this country Gen. Wladislas Sikorski, Prime Minister of the non-existent government of Poland. Since he holds office not by the will of the Polish people, but by grace of the British government, perhaps his visit is not unrelated to the Anglo-American alliance and the prosecution of the war. There are many Poles in this country, and though they are for the most part democratic Poles whose brethren were oppressed by the late semi-fascist, anti-Semitic government of Poland, General Sikorski and Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt apparently hope to sell them the idea that a war for the restoration of that brutal dictatorship is a great crusade for democracy. Sikorski comes here with an agreement just negotiated with the Canadian government for the recruitment of a Polish armed force in Canada for service overseas. Perhaps he expects a similar agreement here.

Though the government of the Polish capitalists, landowners, and generals is non-existent, their war aims are of a very material kind. For instance, in an interview General Sikorski gave to William Stoneman, London correspondent of the New York *Post* and Chicago *Daily News,* he said: "Poland is fighting to recover her pre-war frontiers in the West *as well as in the East" (Post,* March 28). Lest there be any doubt as to his meaning, Sikorski explained: "We must tame the imperialisms, in the first instance, the German and Bolshevist imperialisms." By linking the Nazi conquest of Poland with its opposite, the Red Army's liberation of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia, Sikorski underscores the basic anti-Soviet character of the war aims of the Polish reactionaries and their British and American masters. As for the western frontiers, Sikorski expressed the desire of his crowd to emulate the Nazis in reverse by seizing parts of Poznan, Pomerania, and East Prussia, all of which now belong to Germany.

In Britain Sikorski's friends are issuing four anti-Semitic newspapers while the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist *Daily Worker* is banned. Americans might well draw a few obvious conclusions.

Capitalism Confesses

THE monographs and reports of the Temporary National Economic Committee present a picture almost totally at variance with the daily utterances of those who are generally considered "leaders of American thought." The results of three years of investigation, the most complete ever made of a profit economy, hardly bear out the sentiments usually expressed about the state of the nation's "democracy."

A glance through the studies already published reveals startling admissions. "Ordinarily, in a democracy, power resides in the government, while control is exercised by the various pressure groups, chief of which is business," is the flat statement introducing the discussion of "Economic Power and Political Pressure." "By far the largest and most important of these [pressure] groups," the report continues, "is to be found in 'business,' which in this study means the business community, as dominated by the 200 largest non-financial and the fifty largest financial corporations, and the employer and trade associations into which it and its satellites are organized." Or read the introduction to the investigation of concentration and composition of individual incomes: "The perpetuation of large fortunes, however derived, is a potent factor in diminishing equality of opportunity, and, therefore, results in a greater degree of inequality in the distribution of income than would otherwise be the case. . . . We know that most of the wealth and income of the country is owned by a few large corporations, that these corporations in turn are owned by an infinitesimally small number of people, and that the profits from the operation of these corporations go to a very small group with the result that the opportunities for new enterprise, whether corporate or individual, are constantly being restricted." And, finally, the examination of wage rates and labor costs reveals that "Although . . . changes which could be made in labor costs were seldom sufficiently great to affect prices appreciably, they were great enough to make a big difference in profits."

There are two admissions in the above quotations that belie the oft-heard glib premises of those who dominate American economy, whether they sit in the offices of banks and corporations, or in high administration places. Concentration and centralization of wealth (monopolization) has proceeded during the last three decades at such a rate that it is no longer a *trend,* but has become the major characteristic of the nation's economy. And as monopoly spreads, it increasingly dominates the state. A handful of 250 corporations, controlled, as further TNEC studies reveal, by a still smaller handful of interlocking directors, exert immediate sway over whatever administration happens to be in Washington or in the state capitals. Add to this the further admission that greater profits are derived from changes in labor costs (in other words, from the reductions in wages which increase the exploitation of workers), and these two factors add up to the contention Marxists have always expressed—that the interests of the working class, which lives on wages, and the interests of the owning class, which wants wages reduced to swell profits, are opposed. It seems that despite capitalist apologists, there *is* a class struggle.

Is then the TNEC "subversive"? Were the investigators a nest of boring-from-within vipers? Hardly that. Any honest examination of the present economic setup, no matter what the original outlook of the investigators, of necessity must prove the basic contentions of scientific Marxism. Admissions forced on the TNEC by an examination of what really goes on in America may prove embarrassing to the status quo: they are nonetheless true, and as a result, of extreme importance to all who desire to comprehend the American scene.

Once we pass, however, from the recording of economic facts to their interpretation, we tread on ground which must inevitably reveal the inadequacy and class bias of the investigators. For these facts are a powerful indictment not merely of the abuses of capitalism, but of capitalism as an economic system. The work of the TNEC has provided invaluable data that confirm the conclusions of Marx and Lenin. For only socialism can solve the basic problem of monopoly and its threat to the liberties of the people. Short of socialism, there are of course many immediate measures which can provide some protection against the encroachments of monopoly: stiff taxation of big business profits, higher wages, amplified relief, broadening of social security, increased benefits to the farmers, a large-scale federal housing program, provision of credit on easy terms to small businessmen. But all these run directly counter to the present course of the Roosevelt administration which, in the name of a war against fascism, is strengthening big business fascism in the United States. The TNEC monograph, "Technology in our Economy," offers a glimpse of the criminal, destructive character of the present social order when it declares: "If the preparation for and the conduct of war constitute the only adequate compensatory force to the labor-displacing effects of technology, the proposition would then be established that only through war can the present economic system be operated in such a way as to approximate full employment."

This sentence, though softened with an introductory "if," paints the ghastly reality of capitalism today. The Soviet Union has demonstrated that there is a different solution for this problem. Instead of labor being displaced by machinery, private monopoly and all its evil effects can be displaced and a life of abundance and peace made possible through the cooperative ownership of the means of production by all the people. In future issues NEW MASSES will discuss in greater detail the most important reports made by the TNEC.

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Readers' Forum

On "Let My People Go"

To New Masses: I must write in "protest" to a statement which appeared in an otherwise laudatory review of Henrietta Buckmaster's remarkable *Let My People Go* (New Masses, March 11). It seems that Miss Lawson, who is really a splendid critic and an authority on Negro history, makes a "criticism" because the "point of view" is idealism and not historical materialism. Since when did a competent New Masses critic go out on a limb and criticize a book because it is not written from the point of view of historical materialism? Isn't it true that very much of the underground and anti-slavery movement was traceable, as Buckmaster says, to the "Puritan way of thought," etc.? Engels' analysis is not applicable in this case at all. Miss Buckmaster has written a masterful book in which she does her best to limn those forces which were responsible; perhaps not always correctly, but it is always sincere. True, she doesn't make all of the distinctions Lawson would make, but the positive things are there—the correct analysis of W. L. Garrison, the able account of England's role, and many others. I don't believe that Lawson's is a carping criticism, but it must have been discouraging to the writer of this "magnificent achievement." As Sterling Brown has remarked, there was a great deal of idealism which permeated the entire Abolition movement and it could not be ignored by Buckmaster.

Eugene Holmes.

Washington, D. C.

To New Masses: First, let me repeat the substance of my review of Miss Buckmaster's book, since discussion of its philosophical viewpoint may unfortunately overshadow the great positive achievement of her work.

Let My People Go is one of the most important and interesting contributions that has been made to American history. I earnestly hope that my brief criticism, in the course of an otherwise laudatory review, will deter no one from reading the book.

Mr. Holmes objects to my statement that Miss Buckmaster's book was written from the standpoint of philosophical idealism. He says also that Engels' analysis is not applicable in this case—that is, the case of the rise of the Abolition movement and the underground railroad. The quotation from Engels was: ". . . the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange, changes have silently taken place, with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping."

Mr. Holmes also says, apparently in "refutation" of my review, that "there was a great deal of idealism which permeated the entire Abolition movement."

I believe that two confusions are involved here. First, I strongly suspect a confusion between historical materialism and economic determinism. Second—and this is closely connected with the first confusion—there seems to be an erroneous belief that the materialist viewpoint denies the role of ideas, ideals, theories in transforming society.

Abolition did not become a mass movement until the development in this country of *industrial* capitalism. The first great impetus to native manufacturing in the United States was the war of 1812. Industrial capitalism was the enemy of slavery, as merchant capitalism was its ally. Closely connected with the growth of industry was the growth of the Northwest, a region of petty commodity producers, chiefly in the field of agriculture, a region which gradually became a market and a source of raw materials for the manufacturing East. On this basis, there came about a break between West and South, and a realignment of sections in which West and East stood together against further slavery encroachments.

Thus there came about a growth of industrial capitalism, a growth of the proletariat, and a growth of the Northwestern states. By the 1830's and 1840's, the contradictions between the new industrial capitalism and the ever-expanding slave power, had become the foremost factor in national life. The government of the nation was in the hands of slaveholders and the allies of slaveholders. The law and custom of the nation favored the slaveholder in all things. Industrial capitalism demanded the national market for itself, but the slaveholders' government favored England; the capitalists wanted a free labor force, but the slaves were bound to the plantations; capital wanted opportunity to invest everywhere under the American flag, but was denied that opportunity in slave territory; it desired internal improvements, railroads, etc., which the pro-slavery government refused to grant. Thus, the new, growing forces of production were in rebellion against the relations of production.

Out of this contradiction arose the need to change the social system, to remove the obstacles to the growth of industrial production, to create a system in harmony with the new productive forces. The *History of the CPSU* declares: ". . . changes in the modes of production inevitably call forth changes in the whole social system, social ideas, political views and political institutions—they call forth a reconstruction of the whole social and political order. . . . After the new productive forces have matured, the existing relations of production and their upholders—the ruling classes—become that 'insuperable' obstacle which can only be removed by the conscious action of the new classes, by the forcible acts of these classes, by revolution. Here there stands out in bold relief the *tremendous role* of new social ideas, of new political institutions, of a new political power, whose mission it is to abolish by force the old relations of production. Out of the conflict . . . there arise new social ideas; the new ideas organize and mobilize the masses; the masses become welded into a new political army."

And so only now came the knowledge that slavery was wrong, unreasonable, and unjust; now the Abolition movement became a mass movement; soon the Republican Party was born, dedicated to the slogan: "No new foot of slave soil." This could not have occurred in a prior century. Marx says: ". . . mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the task itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in process of formation." *(Critique of Political Economy.)*

Now as to another of Mr. Holmes' statements: that "there was a good deal of idealism which permeated the entire Abolition movement." Granted. The Abolition movement, which arose out of the material conditions of life, out of the changes in the forces of production, was a *progressive* movement, and for the furthering of this movement individuals sacrificed, in some cases, life itself. The *History of the CPSU* says clearly:

"It does not follow . . . that social ideas, theories, political views and political institutions are of no significance in the life of society, that they do not reciprocally affect social being, the development of the material conditions of the life of society. . . . As regards the *significance* of social ideas, theories, views, and political institutions, as regards their *role* in history, historical materialism, far from denying them, stresses the role and importance of these factors in the life of society, in its history.

"New social ideas and theories arise only after the development of the material life of society has set new tasks before society. But once they have arisen they become a most potent force which facilitates the carrying out of the new tasks."

It would be well to sum up with Marx's magnificent statement of the case in his "Critique of Political Economy":

"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness . . . the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production . . . and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out."

Elizabeth Lawson.

New York City.

Free Browder

To New Masses: Quite apart from the injustice to Earl Browder, and those who are immediately involved in the wrong which is decreed against him, his family, his friends, and the cause for which he is spokesman, there is a further injustice which strikes to the heart of all respect between man and man, and between citizens and their government. The pettiness of this prosecution, the cowardice of it, and the essential dishonesty of it, all combine to undermine confidence in human association and human government altogether. There is a wrong against humanity when one cannot think, even of those from whom he differs most fundamentally, with a certain measure of respect and dignity, as at least worthy of human regard. Prize fighters shake hands with each other before they battle, as recognizing a decency of bearing between them. But no one wants to shake hands with a man who strikes below the belt. Our present national administration does us all a wrong in inviting contempt rather than regard for its course. We are entitled to decency of conduct on its part, even where we disagree with it. This is plainly, and undeniably sheer indecency, a catering to the meanest elements in an immediately hysterical mob.

No one thinks now of Eugene V. Debs as having suffered shame because of that which Woodrow Wilson, and his official and judicial associates, did to him when they sent him to Atlanta. But everybody knows that the smirch of it is upon those who used the forms of justice to demonstrate their own indecency now and for generations to come. We had a right to expect no such besliming of themselves upon the part of President Roosevelt, the Attorney General of the United States, and the Supreme Court. It is to them, and through them to us, the irreparable injury is done.

Robert Whitaker.

Los Gatos, Calif.

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VOICE OF HIS PEOPLE

Frederick Douglass' autobiography. The saga of a slave-born American. "He fought like a tiger to make the Negro's freedom real." Reviewed by Herbert Aptheker. . . . John Steuben's "Labor in Wartime."

LIFE AND TIMES OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS, *written by himself. Pathway Press. $5.*

IN THE simple and modest manner that has invariably characterized the world's great men and women, Frederick Douglass remarked of himself: "My part has been to tell the story of the slave. The story of the master never wanted for narrators." Yes, the master class has had and has today many spokesmen, but it never has had and never will produce one of the stature and grandeur of this slave-born American, who, escaped from bondage, made himself the voice of his people. And that voice neither flattery nor slander nor violence could stifle.

Entering the Abolitionist movement one hundred years ago at a time of terrific storm and stress, he represented the living realization for which all members of the movement had been praying—one who had known slavery and was eloquent, impressive, energetic, and fearless. There he stood, a magnificent figure, impregnable, incorruptible, bearing slavery's scars upon his back, suffering, as he spoke, the anguish of knowing that a brother and four sisters were yet slaves. Those who once saw Frederick Douglass never forgot him.

To Elizabeth Cady Stanton he appeared "like an African Prince, conscious of his dignity and power, grand in his physical proportions, majestic in his wrath, as with keen wit, satire, and indignation he portrayed the bitterness of slavery, the humiliation of subjection to those who in all human virtues and capacities were inferior to himself." Wendell Phillips who rarely was at a loss for words, could, concerning Douglass but say, "He is one of our ablest men"; and the same response of almost speechless amazement came from an elderly tailor in Bristol, England, in 1846. Having heard the Negro, he was seen shaking his head and repeating: "And *he* was a slave!"

When such a man met the despicable taunts concerning the alleged inhumanity of the Negro uttered by nincompoops like the Tammany wardheel, Police Captain Rynders, by facing him and demanding, "Am I a Man?" it left even that garrulous prostitute hopelessly stumbling for a retort.

Where Douglass went there went the conscience of America, and he gave it no pause. Every village north of the Mason and Dixon Line saw this man and heard his message. Was no hall available? Very well, he walked the streets clanging a bell, announcing his presence, and held forth beneath the clouds. Was there no one to offer him food? He would go hungry, but remain vocal. Was there no shelter? He would sleep in a barn or field, but he would be heard. Was he to be mobbed? He would resist, until with arm broken, and head bloody, he was left for dead, but he would arise, wash away the blood, bandage up the arm, and continue to bear witness for those in chains.

He took his message to England and Scotland and Ireland, broadened it by pioneering in the battle for woman's equality, and enhanced it by putting his pen, as well as his tongue, to work; from 1847 to the end of the Civil War he issued a weekly newspaper. He wrote a narrative of his life that went into dozens of printings, was translated into French, German, and Swedish, and reached thousands of homes throughout the world.

He led in developing political parties devoted to the cause of Abolition, thus rescuing that movement from the pacifistic, anarchistic sectarianism of William Lloyd Garrison that, from about 1845 on, hung like an albatross about its neck. During the Civil War he immediately saw that its mission "was the liberation of the slave as well as the salvation of the Union," and Douglass did more than any other single person to develop sentiment for this, and to make its realization inevitable by getting Negro soldiers into Lincoln's Union Army and thus transforming it into an Army of Liberation.

While not a few of the old-time Abolitionists felt their work was done with Appomattox, this was not true of Douglass. He fought like a tiger to make the Negro's freedom real and alive by getting political and economic guarantees for equality and justice, no one doing more than did Douglass to get the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments added to the Constitution.

Stubbornly he battled against the betrayal of the Reconstruction effort from its genesis under Johnson to its culmination under Hayes, knowing well and ever repeating that unless "the ballot-box, the jury-box, and the cartridge-box" were available to the Negro his freedom and well-being and the freedom and well-being of the nation would be vitiated.

Only death, which came to Frederick Douglass Feb. 20, 1895, brought to a rest this giant of a man. It is a great privilege to be able to tell the readers of NEW MASSES that now, after a lapse of almost fifty years, the story of his life, told by himself, is once more readily available. All who yearn for a decent, creative life are heavily in debt to the worthy successors of Frederick Douglass—Angelo Herndon, Richard B. Moore, Paul Robeson, and Dr. Lawrence D. Reddick, whose vision and perseverance made possible the publication of this book.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Lessons to Remember

LABOR IN WARTIME, *by John Steuben. International Publishers. $1.*

THIS remarkable book is as fresh and provocative as the recent crop of labor headlines. It adds up to a simple lesson drawn from parallels between the tumultuous problem facing the trade unions now and those which confronted them on the eve of April 1917. But more important, Steuben knows where the parallels end. He knows the crucial differences of leadership and organization which have prepared labor against another betrayal.

Gompers' ghost, of course, still presides in the upper councils of the AFL. The "old fox's" disciples are being skinned in the same way he was by Wilson. That is not to say that he or his descendants are innocents. Collaborationist policies paralyze Mr. Green and make possible the surrender to White House flattery. Sidney Hillman holds the same beliefs except that they are embellished with prettier phrases about labor winning a greater measure of social control by fully participating in the war effort. In either case the pattern of surrender remains the same.

How Washington in the last war played the game of baiting the trap was first apparent in Gompers' appointment to the Council of National Defense. Publicly his responsibility was to safeguard the unions. In practice, however, he approved the freezing of employer-worker relationships on the ground that to act otherwise would impede the flow of war goods. For every small concession granted Gompers (the big boys knew that the old man had to deliver occasionally) his industrialist colleagues on the council were able to get another open shop established. To his embarrassment the unions protested. If the wind blew too hard from down below, he would again meekly request (he was a holy

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terror—in a labor convention) revisions of policy which were promptly rejected. For example, when the government began to hire non-union men to construct cantonments, the union carpenters walked off their jobs. The settlement which Gompers effected with the War Department was hailed as marking the beginning of a new government attitude. Actually, as Steuben reports, the understanding was a distinct setback because according to a letter from a representative of the War Department, "the government could not possibly . . . commit itself in the employment of labor to employing only union labor or even to give preference to union labor." If the organized carpenters had known about this fine piece of Machiavellian handiwork, they might have acted. The note, however, was not made public until after the war.

Secret diplomacy could not deter the labor war that raged across the country. Steuben's remarks about the first outburst of strikes are instructive. First, the walkouts revealed a cleavage betweten the AFL hierarchy and the rank and file. Second, despite the special "consideration" shown these workers, the largest number of strikes took place in four of the most important war industries—metal trades, shipbuilding, coal mining, and copper mining. Third, a large number of the strikes waged for increases in pay were won. Fourth, employer resistance was concentrated on those labor battles fought for union recognition. And Steuben concludes that "Wilson's 'recognition' of Gompers did not mean recognition of the trade unions at large."

When terror failed to halt organizational campaigns, Mr. Wilson looked into his *New Freedom* and emerged with a fresh "democratic" instrument — the War Mediation Board. In sixteen months of life, its outstanding achievement was the encouragement of company unions. The board's function, as Steuben so clearly defines it, was to eliminate strikes "without *formally* declaring them illegal. This was the strategy, jointly worked out by the administration, employers, and labor officials. . . ." Steuben also notes that along with the board's activities went the decisions of anti-labor judges who freely granted injunctions to companies whose plants were struck. The federal court of the eastern district of Missouri issued an injunction against striking machinists on the ground that the firm for which they were working was in effect a government agency because it was producing munitions. The state's functionaries attempted to establish the principle that strikes were to be enjoined for the duration of the war. Those who were more cautious operated on the assumption that while it would be too risky to outlaw strikes (such action would reveal too nakedly the internal objectives of the war) they could be drastically curbed if not tortured to death by compulsory arbitration or mediation while workers remained on the job. In the event that a strike was inevitable, the men could be threatened with conscription—the "work or fight" formula.

It is these things which Steuben especially recalls for the trade unionist. His account, however, does not end here. He is mindful of the countermeasures which labor took in its own behalf. His condensation of the activities of the IWW, the great strikes in steel, coal, and copper, the union battles in the northwest, complete the larger picture. Particularly valuable are his comments on the peace movement, its deficiencies and successes.

In a closing balance sheet, Steuben summarizes labor's gains and losses in the last war period and its immediate aftermath. What wage increases were won were slowly pared down by the rising cost of living. Unemployment continued even with the establishment of the eight-hour day in a large part of industry. One is especially glad to see that he has deflated the myth about labor's increased recognition in the war years. To be sure, the AFL, against the will of its leadership, did expand in numbers. But the basic industries remained largely unorganized. On the morning after, the AFL was to find that in spite of its hopeful collaboration with the administration it was in many respects worse off than before 1917. The outcome might have been entirely different had labor leadership pursued an independent policy whose goal it would have been to break the back of the open shop. There were, of course, those labor and political leaders whom the war taught a profound lesson. The way was opened to the founding of the Communist Party. In the course of the next fifteen years, culminating with the organization of the CIO, labor time and again dipped into its war experiences for tactical guidance.

Labor in Wartime has so much merit (it continues to be a best seller in the trade unions) that it is perhaps rather picayune to mention a few of its shortcomings. What the book needed, it seems to me, was a fuller discussion of the theoretical foundations on which Steuben predicates his criticism of the Gompers leadership and the war itself. Such material would have provided the trade unionist with the means of swimming through the torrent of bilge water that comes from the White House labor lieutenants. It would have been to the point also if Steuben had gone a little beyond the immediate conclusions of his data and talked about the logic of socialism as an alternative to what Sidney Hillman (in the image of Mr. Bevin) offers the country's working men. But for all that, Steuben's book is in the best tradition of militant labor journalism. It is a great asset to any picket line.

JOHN STUART.

Comstock Chronicle

CITY OF ILLUSION, *by Vardis Fisher. Harper and Bros. $2.50.*

WHEN the Federal Writers Project sent Vardis Fisher to Nevada to assist in the Nevada Guide, he encountered in the legendary Virginia City of the 1860's a lode of fable, an event from which he extracted the chief characters and episodes of this novel about the Comstock. But historical curiosity alone is not a sufficiently powerful impulse to convert the ore of these old-timers' yarns into the shaped metal of a novel. And one asks whether Mr. Fisher has not written a more dramatic, a more pictorial "Nevada Guide," rich in topical allusion, a real banquet of extraordinary incident, and yet lacking in emotional continuity, indifferent to the impulses and aspirations of living men. Commonly a "historical novel" is supposed to be a novel set safely and finally in some enclosed cove of the past. But obviously no writer can really escape the currents of his own age unless he wishes to write one of those perennial "lusty and swashbuckling" soporifics.

City of Illusion is the story of Virginia City's first millionaires, Eilley and Sandy Bowers, of the aristocratic ambition of the Scotch woman, Eilley, who dreamed of an old world dignity for this rude mining town, of the illiterate mule-skinner who was her partner, and of the hungry belly and itching palm of this Sierra settlement—domain of bully-boys and harlots and fortune hunters, of slick financiers, of the disappointed who died by the thousands in floods and cave-ins, by fatal gas, by explosion, and by fire in the mines. These mining episodes are the most stirring portions of the book, probably because they reach into our own time when men die similar deaths in the coal fields.

Though the book is an attractive chronicle it is not always adequate history. The men and women of this frontier city are represented as being entirely indifferent to the stirring national events that filled those years. They appear to have been more concerned about the prize-fight in England between Sayers and Benecia Boy Heenan. "While they waited, news came that Civil War was inevitable, that Seward would be the next President. They said to hell with all that. What was Benecia Boy doing?" In reality, the frontier towns were violently anti-slavery, and I note in other accounts that Virginia City sent two regiments to Fort Churchill and contributed generously to the Union cause.

Vardis Fisher was anxious to show us the fall of the traditional city of illusion, of this hell-bent Babel of the outside chance, the hundred-to-one odds. He desired to isolate this theme and set this roaring city upon a seemingly bare continent. But has not such a selection narrowed the scope and message of the novel—does it not make all the more thin and dubious the mystic overtones that ennoble the central character? We find it very difficult to feel with the little old lady who walked in Eilley's funeral cortege that "somehow there had been, and still was, a deeper truth which (we) had missed."

I am afraid that the author was merely fascinated by his material—and it is dangerously fascinating material for a novelist. Somehow Mark Twain and the waggish editor, Steve Gilpin, are still playing their game with the credulous outsider. For this twentieth century novelist has found nothing in the archives and amid the old relics besides the oft-storied obsession with drink and women and silver.

MILLICENT LANG.

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Brief Reviews

HORIZONS, UNLIMITED, *by S. Paul Johnston. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $3.75.*

Mr. Johnston has put together a valuable graphic history of man's efforts to conquer the ocean of air and to move about in it. The text which accompanies the innumerable excellent illustrations is largely non-technical, and should be illuminating to those who have no special knowledge of aerodynamics.

Practically every attempt that man has made to fly since Leonardo da Vinci constructed successful flying models is covered by the illustrations, and they provide an interesting running history of the art. Like most such works, Mr. Johnston's book suffers from a defect yet to be repaired: the absence of any considerable social understanding of the airplane, its place in the history of our developing modes of production. So important an adjunct of man's instruments for the conquest of nature cannot adequately be seen as separate from all the others.

WINGED WARFARE, *by Maj. Gen. H. H. Arnold and Col. Ira C. Eaker. Harper & Bros. $3.*

Major-General Arnold is Chief of the US Army Air Corps and acting deputy chief of staff for air. With Colonel Eaker, who is also a pioneer in American aviation, he has written a remarkably inadequate treatment of the history and strategy of air-combat, and the omissions may be ascribed, no doubt, to the necessity for maintaining military secrecy about this most important branch of the armed forces. So it is only to be expected that this book would present only a skeletonized estimate of the operations of air-power, a generalized outline of its various tactics (pursuit, bombardment, liaison, reconnaissance) and the organization of the diverse branches of an air force.

MANSION HOUSE OF LIBERTY, *by Phyllis Bottome. Little, Brown and Co. $2.50.*

In Miss Bottome's book the British ruling class hides behind the humanity of the English people. For the present it claims no credit. "The Devil a monk would be;" because he was sick, according to the old saying. It merely hopes that its sins will be forgotten in the contemplation of the fortitude with which others bear the consequences. It would be ludicrous to comment on the author's conception of political science, which includes Otto Strasser as one of the builders of a future Germany. Her ideas would be interesting to an anthropologist, though. Her remark on the future of humanity: "Surely, this would be a new kind of dog worth breeding," shows how hard it is for the inhabitants of Horseback Hall to disguise themselves even when it's a matter of life and death for their class.

Michaels

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"WATCH ON THE RHINE"

Lillian Hellman's new play tells the story of a German anti-fascist. Questions that remain unanswered. The magnificent performances of Paul Lukas and George Coulouris.

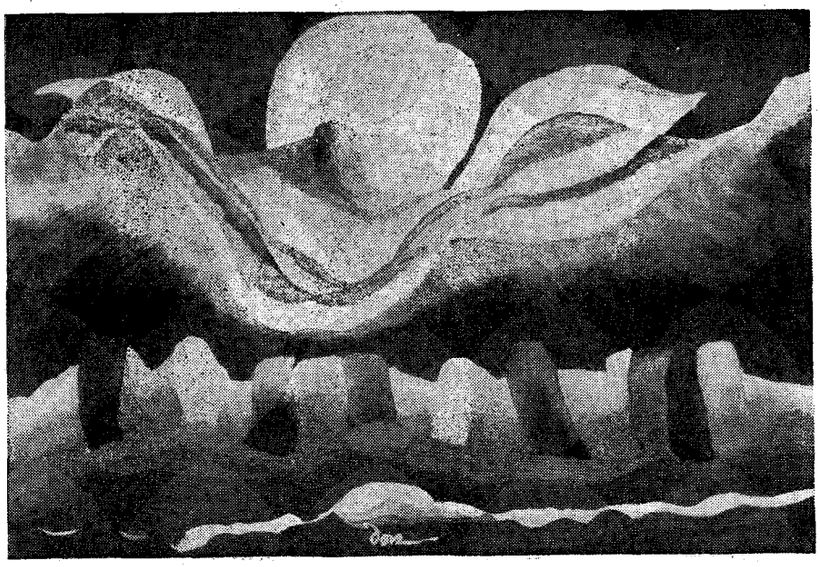
IN HER new play, *Watch on the Rhine*, Lillian Hellman has attempted a further dramatic evaluation of the central problem of our time—the struggle against the developing forces of reaction. Miss Hellman is a craftsman of far more than average competency—her previous play was a brilliant and incisive portrayal of individual greed that revealed implications far beyond the immediacy of its early twentieth-century parable of "The Little Foxes" that spoiled the grapes.

Watch on the Rhine presents Kurt Mueller, German husband of an American wife, who returns with her to her childhood home near Washington, D. C., twenty years after her original departure. They bring with them their three foreign-born children, and they meet in Sara Farrelly Mueller's former home, her mother, widow of the great American statesman Joshua Farrelly; Sara's brother David; Teck de Brancovis, penniless Rumanian exile and his American wife. In this pleasant country home near the nation's capitol there develops a life-and-death struggle between de Brancovis, who is a fascist hanger-on in close touch with the Nazi embassy, and Mueller, originally an engineer, who for the past seven years has been closely identified with the German underground movement, with the anti-fascist war in Spain. De Brancovis recognizes Mueller, who is carrying a large sum of money contributed in small sums by the poor for the purpose of effecting the release of captured anti-Nazi fighters; he attempts blackmail. Mueller, whose mission of anti-fascist struggle and salvation is his life, finds that de Brancovis is in his way; he must kill him, to ensure his own arrival in Germany and the safety of his fellow anti-fascists whom he is going to help. His safe return to his wife and children is extremely doubtful.

It is necessary to relate this skeletonized plot of *Watch on the Rhine* in order properly to evaluate what Miss Hellman has attempted, and what she has achieved. With some exceptions noted below, the play is instinct with the sincerity of purpose of a dramatist who possesses potentialities far beyond the grasp of any other writer on the contemporary theater scene. Miss Hellman can, and does, engage the emotions of her audience; there is evidence of a sound mentality and a healthy emotional grasp of human character, in most of what she writes. She makes her hero Kurt Mueller live upon the stage and in the minds of her audience. She relates his wife, Sara, to the spectators, and they understand not only her devotion to her courageous husband and her children, but to the cause for which he fights. Mueller is a figure of complete integrity, with all the qualities of a man and none of the superhuman attributes romantically ascribed to his type. He has known fear, and knows it still. He is full of love—for humanity dead and to be born, as well as for the living. Contrasted with his American mother-in-law, his brother-in-law, and the American wife of the Rumanian exile, he is full of the juice of life while they are desiccated figures. His relatives do not understand him fully, or what he stands for—even though they offer him their support and help him to escape; the sort of life they have led, in contrast to his own, has made it impossible for them to understand him. Nor is it possible for him—within the frame-work of Miss Hellman's drama—to explain himself to them.

When you isolate this factor, you have placed your finger on the flaw from which there grows and spreads a network of fallacy, both dramatic and political. *Watch on the Rhine* has been hailed by the daily reviewers as the anti-fascist play for which we have all been waiting, and it raises—as a result—a question that demands an unequivocal answer at this very moment when reaction is developing with the rapidity and voraciousness of a plague. To put it positively: it is no longer possible to be anti-Nazi, and nothing more. It is necessary today to define "anti-fascism," to delimit its meaning, to rescue the phrase from the warmongers and the fascists themselves. This Miss Hellman fails to do. Hence, Kurt Mueller, by not explaining himself to his relatives by marriage—and by extension, to the audience—remains vague as to purpose, vague as to direction. And his intentions and direction are central to the success of Miss Hellman's intentions. She is dealing with precious human lives today; her drama should leave no scope for confusion or obscurantism, either intentional or unintentional; the issues are too vital for our survival.

Why cannot Kurt Mueller explain himself? Why does not Miss Hellman do more than skate around the central issue she presents for our consideration? Kurt Mueller cannot explain himself to his well-born Washington mother-in-law and her son, because there is no common ground on which they can stand.



Right: Morris Neuwirth's "Fulton Dock" at the ACA Gallery in N. Y.

Left: "Rising Moon" by Arthur G. Dove. At An American Place in N. Y.

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These people have never had to face the tragic issue that means daily life or death to him—and to us all. They are brittle people, far removed from the commonalty of daily toil; people living on inherited income and looking at life from the vantage point of the leisured class—well-intentioned as they may be. Kurt Mueller, in the brief explanations he makes of his life and his struggle against fascism in Germany and the world, is an ambiguous figure. You do not know where he is going. He fights for "freedom" and for "a new world order." These words, these days, are common coin: common in the hands of such people and forces as Hitler, the National Association of Manufacturers, Winston Churchill, President Roosevelt, the Social Democrats. The symbols *must* be redefined; Mueller does not define them for us.

It is true that there is considerable internal evidence that Miss Hellman as well as her hero know exactly what they are talking about. While there is no elaboration in the play of the nature and structure of international fascism, Mueller does state that German fascism "rose to power on the backs of the most powerful men" of Germany. While there is no mention whatsoever of the very existence of that majority of the world population we call the working class, the proletariat, Mueller does refer to the struggle in Spain, by implication, to the common people of Spain. The fascists are not invincible, he says; "You saw that in Spain." They are cruel and they are clever, he says, but they can be beaten. Perhaps Miss Hellman takes it for granted that her audience is clear on the issues in Spain—that what happened there has shown to *everyone* the simple fact that *only* the working people of the world can defeat their separate fascisms. If this is true, it should account for her failure to elaborate that lesson beyond a passing reference—and it also finds her in serious political error. For just as Mueller never enlarges upon the origins of the "fascism" he is fighting (in common with Roosevelt, Willkie, and all the other crusaders), so he never states the cure for this pestilence of our time—world-wide organization by the working people against their separate home-grown brands of fascism.

Hence the issue is—to put it bluntly—bilked; and with all due respect to differences of opinion, there is reason to believe that Miss Hellman alone, with her reputation and her skill, could have successfully and brilliantly stated and elaborated that issue. But she must be given credit for having attempted to say as much as she has said. What she has written is an anti-Nazi play that, at this particular point in our developing struggle, can be and has already been misused by those who would like to whip us or cajole us into imperialist war under the banner of fighting fascism in Germany. Certainly Miss Hellman gives evidence that she would like to prevent this—she carefully avoids any reference to the present war; she gives no comfort to those "anti-fascists" who offer in solution the slogan "Aid to Britain—Greece." Robert Sherwood, Elmer

CONTINUED . . .

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Rice, and Clare Booth have offered this slogan—by design. Philip Barry advanced it out of apparent muddle-headedness. But by not clarifying the issues of anti-Nazism versus true international anti-fascism, *Watch on the Rhine* lends itself to distortion by the enemies of the people, those fascists who are currently disguised as anti-fascists.

The play itself is highly uneven. It lacks the tight and almost inevitable construction of *The Little Foxes,* as well as the mounting emotional tension. The device of using the Mueller children to state certain political theses—"out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," etc.—seems contrived, artificial. There is a liberal dosage of pure hokum in the more melodramatic scenes, and in the touching farewell of Mueller to his children. Some of this has been supplied by Miss Hellman, some by her otherwise brilliant director, Mr. Shumlin. There are few acting performances on the current stage, however, that can equal those offered by Paul Lukas as Mueller and George Coulouris as his fascist antagonist. Both these men play magnificently within the framework of their roles, fill them to the skin, endow them with three-dimensional life. In Lukas there is great emotional force and sincerity; in Coulouris a quality of genuine humanity, partly supplied by the author, partly by the actor. You understand him. As Mueller's wife, Mady Christians displays womanly devotion and great sensibility. As her mother, Lucille Watson is as brittle and as genuine as her written character. Credit should also go to Frank Wilson as a Negro servant for the sensitivity of his performance, to Eda Heinemann as a white servant-companion. Two of the children are charming if indifferent performers; one of them, who has been treated to startling superlatives, is objectionable.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Tortures of Escapism

The physical ordeals of an evening at the movies

THIS churlish note will be about showmen —the people who run the movie houses —and will contain several helpful hints for easing the ordeal of going to the movies.

The architecture of Manhattan movie houses, until the Rockefeller pleasure dome was built, derived from the Grand Opera House. How silly the interior can become is illustrated by the fact that ten percent of the interior space is lost in boxes at the side of the hall—boxes that afforded a splendid intimacy with Lottie Crabtree, but make Greta Garbo look like Dore's Don Quixote. Result: nobody sits in them. The simple long rectangle of the nickelodeon, adapted from storerooms, was forgotten when the big business-Roxy era opened, and has only been revived in the small art cinema. Even Radio City has side sections where you are forced to sit at a maddening forty-five-degree angle

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from the screen. Pure commercial greed is the main factor, but also plain stupidity in design; perhaps they are corollaries. Practically all of the Broadway first run houses are wretchedly overblown for movie purposes. Decentralization, or breaking a Capitol audience up into three audiences in rooms of agreeable vantages, will not be possible until the first run practice is broken up. People will continue to jam into the first run monster until first run films are distributed simultaneously to a dozen neighborhood theaters.

Commercial avarice is also responsible for the crowding of seating space. Radio City is the only theater I frequent where it is possible to walk erect into middle seats without forcing your fellow fans to suspend themselves on the upraised edge of their seats or risk dislocation of the knee caps. By the surrender of six rows the stress could be distributed. Another possible remedy might be the addition of several more aisles, particularly on the dead side walls of the houses, and splitting the separate sections so that no more than four or five seats are together in a row. These aisles could of course be narrower than the ones now in use, since there are more of them.

The matter of women's hats is a traditional curse of the cinema. Finding myself in the shade of some of this foliage I have been emboldened to tap the lady on the shoulder and politely request the removal of the hat. I have met only one woman, and then in a projection room, who had the wit to turn around and ask if her plumes were in the way. You can't admire a woman's hat in the dark, anyway. Perhaps an unwritten law should be made that women check their hats in the lobby just as Western gunmen were required to leave their hardware in the foyer of social halls in the old days. Reviving the sound practice of slides on the screen admonishing such anti-social practices would also be welcome. One-minute shorts could be made in which the more palpitating male stars would stare into the ladies' eyes, smile winningly, and chide them against keeping their hats on.

We might also learn from the European blackout and require white kneepads and carapaces on moviegoers whom you stumble over in the dark, getting to your seat. Some people have the trick of complete invisibility and you cannot wait for a snow scene to venture into your chosen seat.

Prior seating in an empty row gives you the privilege of occupying the arm rests and your neighbor must become distraught shifting his arms about. No wonder people sit on their hands. Let some daring entrepreneur sit down with pencil and paper and consider the general good will he might gain by providing arm rests for all.

Did you ever drop a coin in a movie theater and hear it rolling saucily away down the slope? A small gutter or ridge under each row of seats would break the course of lost and rolling objects.

One of the worst practices that has ap-

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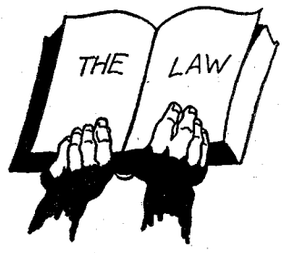

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peared in recent years in the movie palaces is the complete nonsense of drawing the curtain between each subject on the bill. There's nothing behind the curtain but the screen and the first frames of the main title are weirdly distorted as it is projected on this stupid curtain. Run the curtain once, if you must, during the two-minute intermission that clears the house, but hands off between subjects.

Equally infuriating is the red or blue footlight turned on the screen at the beginning and end of a film. The director made the film to begin and end in itself—in black and white. Away with this absurdity!

The matter of program credits is another classic malpractice of the movies. Hollywood films generally carry the cast of characters at the beginning and end of the film, but for a short time, and again distorted by the ubiquitous curtain. A hundredth of the ballyhoo fund on a nationally distributed film could be allotted to simple printed programs carrying this information, which the audience could carry out of the theaters for perusal over a coke. This idea alone would revolutionize public awareness that there is more to the film than Robert Taylor and Hedy Lamarr. These programs could be distributed to every crossroads theater along with the cans of film, and have space for the manager's own imprint; could, in fact, be mailed beforehand by the manager as advertisement for the picture. Children who collect fan photos would treasure these souvenirs and learn something of the people who make the movie.

I am not so impractical that I would object to the love, fear, and violence appeals of movie advertising, but there are several things that might be squeezed in under the closeups of the stars—such as the playing times of the feature to encourage the growing practice of entering the theater at the beginning of the drama. Not having this information works no hardship on a reviewer whose familiarity with plot cliches allows him to fill in the rest of the plot no matter at what point he begins the film. But others are not vocationally fortunate and are sometimes puzzled upon encountering the middle of a plot they haven't seen for five years.

Newspapers might invite from the movie houses the same sort of orderly advertisement they afford the legitimate theater, in this case alphabetized by stars rather than the titles of pictures. As a concession to the special nature of film advertising appeal, small standardized symbols could be included in these uniform ads. For straight love melodrama a pair of ripe lips; for romantic comedy smiling lips; for Westerns a small smoking gun; for Dead End movies a battered ash can; for the British Army in India a glorious Union Jack. The possibilities are endless. No more than symbols, sometimes in limited combinations, would cover Hollywood's yearly output.

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New Recordings

Brahms is given a brilliant reading by Toscanini

COLUMBIA has just reissued two of the best known symphonies: the Beethoven "Eroica" and Brahms' "Third." Bruno Walter's forthright reading reveals the essential character and sweep of the Beethoven music, while Frederic Stock with the Chicago Orchestra, although treating the Brahms with consistent sympathy, presents no more than a workman-like job, straight and academic.

The recording of Brahms' "Second Piano Concerto" with Toscanini conducting the NBC Orchestra and Vladimir Horowitz as soloist, is the Victor disc for March. This combination, together with an especially careful engineering job, results in a recording far beyond the average. The tonal power, the thematic growth, the relationship and balance of orchestral choirs and solo instrument are executed with the brilliance we have come to expect from Toscanini. If you are accustomed to the tempos of Arthur Schnabel's recording of this concerto, you may find Horowitz uncomfortably slow.

An opportunity to understand the evolution of music during the Middle Ages may now be enjoyed on a new Victor set called "Medieval and Renaissance Choral Music." Starting with a hymn composed about the year 995 A.D., it traces the various types of medieval music, through the Gregorian Chants to the religious pieces of Orlando, de Lassus, and Palestrins. The vague, floating character of this music may sound strangely thin to the modern ear, but on repeated hearings the listener will discover a serene kind of beauty, and a type of esthetic reaction that cannot be experienced in music of relatively recent times. The level of performance and material is extremely high. The Choir of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music, who perform these works, possess remarkable intonation and purity of tone.

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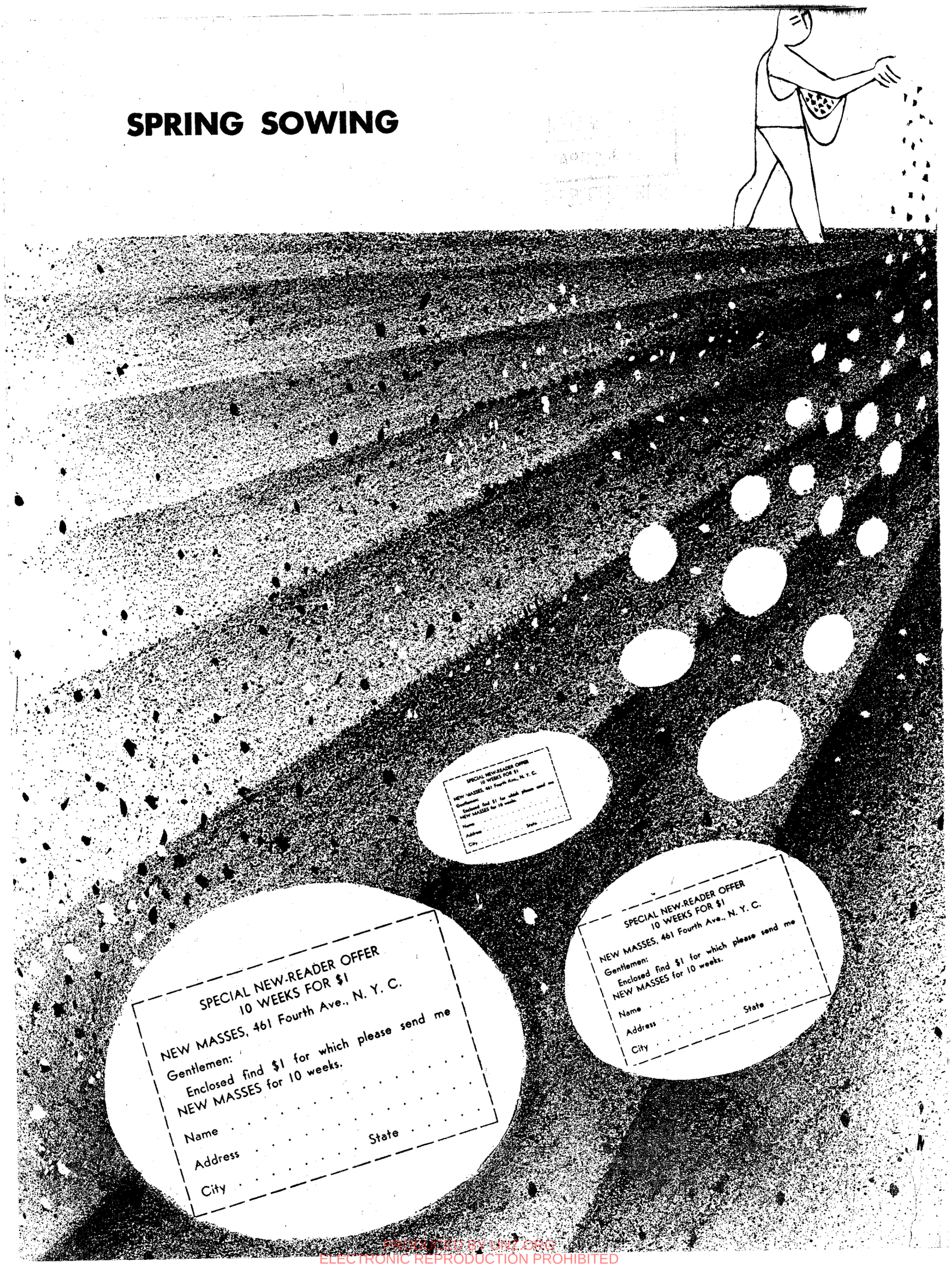

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